







# THE OLD FIELD OFFICER;

OR

THE MILITARY AND SPORTING ADVENTURES

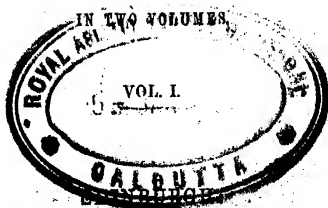
OF

MAJOR WORTHINGTON.

EDITED BY

J. H. STOCQUELER,

AUTHOR OF "THE LIFE OF THE DUKE OF WELLINGTON;" "THE HAND-BOOK OF  
BRITISH INDIA;" "THE MILITARY ENCYCLOPÆDIA;" "A PILGRIMAGE  
THROUGH PERSIA, TURKEY, RUSSIA, GERMANY," &c., &c.



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# THE OLD FIELD OFFICER.

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## INTRODUCTORY CHAPTER.

My late excellent friend, Major Worthington, (I am not permitted to give his real name,) was a very distinguished officer.

I employ the word “distinguished” in its most extensive signification. It is a very ill-used epithet. Editors of newspapers, general officers who write despatches, and military biographers, press it into their service to extol the qualities of heroes whose highest claim to the title is based upon the circumstance of their having half a dozen bars or clasps attached to their Peninsular medal—as if a man was distinguished above his fellows by standing with his Company to be shot at upon the plains of Salamanca and Vittoria; or rushing, against his will, up the breaches at Ciudad Rodrigo and Badajos!

The right of the departed Worthington to the honourable adjective rests upon far more extensive grounds than these. He not only saw service, before many ports in India and the Persian Gulf, in the Netherlands, and in some amateur affairs in Spain; but he was noted as one of the best sportsmen, the best orientalist, the best "fellow," the best theoretical commanding officer, the best billiard player, and the best cook in the Karreebhat Rangers. No man was more universally beloved. He overflowed with the milk of human kindness, kept open house even after his retirement from the service: put his name to bills for old friends who were afterwards troubled with bad memories; and became security to local banks for loans which he had a presentiment, invariably verified, the principals would never trouble themselves to liquidate.

The Major's service extended over a period of thirty-five years. He fought under Lake in Hindostan—was present, *en amateur*, at Waterloo—afterwards went on to the staff at Bombay—served for a time on the staff of the Marquis of Hastings against the Pindarrees—was at the second siege of Bhurtpore under Lord Combermere—and was

*nearly* going into Afghanistan, but accepting a civil appointment in Calcutta, he lived there for several years, until a serious attack of the liver sent him home to die in Craven Street in the Strand.

I first became acquainted with Worthington at the table of Lord William Bentinck, the Governor-General of India. It was a long table—one of the public days. Some of the guests did not come. The Major and I sat *vis-a-vis* over one of the ends of the table, isolated, or rather segregated from the rest—eight empty chairs between us and the mass of the visitors. As became true Englishmen who had never been introduced, we severally observed a dignified silence, occasionally eyeing each other with due aristocratic severity. But a common necessity thawed the ice of British etiquette. “Wine?”—“With pleasure.” No one else within hail but a helpless aid-de-camp, we repeated the pledge, until, with hearts and stomachs warmed, we plunged into conversation, and rapidly discovering the latent merits of each other, swore a firm and unalterable friendship! The Major encouraged me to call—I did. Gradually acquiring Worthington’s confidence, I became a frequent

visitor at his house, and he often did me the honour to make one of a *partie carrée* at my humble domicile—especially in the hot months, for mango fish is then in season: and without mango fish, “a nice little dinner” is an impossibility in Calcutta. Mr. Walker, the magistrate, wrote a charming book on Anstology. Worthington studied the work with care, and applied Walker’s principles (reference being had to local resources) to his own table. “What Walker did and Worthington approved, could not be wrong.” I adopted the practice introduced by my friend, and once a week we dined at our ease. Each of the four sat in his shirt-sleeves (white as snow) beneath a cooling punkah. Mango fish, (a species of smelt, reader, which comes in with the mango fruit, whence its name), mashed potatoes, and oiled butter;—Remove; a roast loin of kid, the fat spread on toast and peppered, *cotelettes à la sauce piquante*, curried chicken;—Remove; snipe and ortolans, sweetbread, tart, jellies, stilton, wines, iced champagne *first*, claret afterwards, Hodgson’s pale ale, *à discrétion*. Dessert—mangoes, Cabul grapes, oranges, almonds, and raisins.—The reader will forgive this gastronomic

digression. It serves to establish the Major's taste, and offers a hint to the degenerate society of the city of palaces.

One morning, after a gallop round the race-course, I dropped in to breakfast with the Major. He was in low spirits. I rallied him. "Ah! been taking a constitutional, eh?" said he,—“that's all over with me. I have given up enacting the rough rider over ploughed *kates* (fields) and the open *midaun* (esplanade.) I had a fierce dun-coloured Kattewar—sold him, and took up with an ambling Arab, and even he is now left to be quietly led around my compound.\* A placid and luxurious drive in my buggy is all I dare venture upon.” I saw that he had just been consulting his mirror, after a slight bilious attack, and was affected by the assurance that he was waxing old. There certainly was evident a growing corpulency of figure, with sundry ungracious and very unbecoming indications of an abdominal increase, which not even the repressing of vastly ingenious riding belts, or other fitting contrivances, could effectually conceal. His whiskers had long since disappeared, bit by bit, inch by inch, hair by hair,

\* The enclosure in which a gentleman's house stands.



as it became necessary to thin them or to curtail their lower limits, as the gray hairs unaccountably and prematurely introduced their frosty sprinkling amid those formerly well-cherished adornments of his bronzed cheek. The cheek itself was sallowed over, and *les premiers rides* had for some time advanced from their slightly indicated symptoms of attack into downright wrinkles and deeply indented furrows. There was more too than a mere incipient baldness upon his brow. It was in vain that he coaxed up the thin and straggling sidelocks to "do duty" on the crown of his head in the hope of concealing the too evident bareness of that unhappy region. Age, inexorable age, was fast stealing upon him and setting its decaying stamp upon his person; and this at a period when the mind itself, though sturdy, and leisurely pressing and adapting itself to the change, was not yet quite disposed to admit the reasonableness of so very fast a realization of what is denominated *going down the hill*.

"I am very glad you have come in, my boy," said Worthington; "I am a cup too low, and late attacks are getting too frequent. I may be sent off suddenly at any time of life, and deposited

in Padre Burrowes's *godown*\*—so it is as well to be prepared." I put in a word to reassure him, much in the consolatory manner in which Mrs. Quickly tells Falstaff he should not think of Heaven. "Pooh, nonsense!" he rejoined. "It can't be far off. Well, listen. I've made you my literary executor. When all's over, claim the big China trunk with the padlock on it. You will find it full of manuscript—some of which has been published in our local periodicals—some which has never enjoyed that honour. Collate it, weed it, and when you find a publisher disposed to do honour to my memory, give 'The Old Field Officer's' reminiscences, adventures, lucubrations, and so forth, to an admiring world."

I accepted the trust; but Worthington lived twelve years after he had confided it to me. Last year he shuffled off this "mortal coil," and his executors handed me his MSS.

Respect for the memory of my departed friend has induced me to take some pains with the legacy. It was a confused heap—disjointed, often

\* *Godown*—cellar. The popular name for the cemetery at Calcutta, where the Rev. Mr. Burrowes had read the funeral service some hundred years.

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unfinished, not always legible. Sporting adventures and observations were curiously intermingled with military disquisitions—fact and fiction were blended together with the faculty of adhesiveness which the *remora* displays in attaching itself to a ship. But resolute patience has disentangled the mass, and I now offer all the best portions of a somewhat heterogeneous collection, with the assurance, to the reader, that the facts detailed are authentic. His own sagacity will enable him to discover that Major Worthington was a man of no common mind. As an author he imparted a grace to many subjects, and appears to have possessed a strong sense of the just and beautiful, and a relish for the ludicrous and the strange.

## CHAPTER I.

BIRTH AND PARENTAGE—INTENDED FOR THE ARMY—OBTAINS AN INDIAN CADETSHIP—A VOYAGE TO INDIA—GAMBLING AND ITS CONSEQUENCES—CALCUTTA IN 1803—A STORM IN THE HOOGLY—FLATTERING RECEPTION—FORT-WILLIAM—CADET ACCOMMODATION—THE FRIEND IN NEED—"WATCHES WERE MADE TO GO"—DR. CHEESE—THE GOOD SAMARITAN—THE CADET ESTABLISHMENT AT BARASETT.

## THE MAJOR'S AUTOBIOGRAPHY.

I AM a younger son—but *that* is a matter of very little consequence; it would have been all one if I had been the eldest, for the broad acres and spacious halls in which my ancestors delighted had passed into other hands long before I could have contemplated them with the eye of one who ever expected to become their proprietor. Malthus had not written his essay: and although Adam Smith explained the division of labour some years previous to my grandfather's decease, yet as he did not say much about the division of property, and as my grandfather looked upon it as a very

meritorious act to beget soldiers to recruit His Majesty's forces by sea and land, it somehow or other never occurred to the good old gentleman's mind that this was no very infallible method of recruiting the family estate. Had he been a Scotchman, indeed, this little oversight might have been easily set to rights, for he might have given all his younger sons a Commission, or an outfit of three shirts and a pair of corduroys, and bid them trust to Providence for the rest. But the law of primogeniture never obtained in our family: it took its rise in times when there was little to be had at home, and a great deal to be got abroad; and on this account the Scotch have adhered to it ever since the days of John Baliol. In our part of the country, gavel-kind was looked upon as the birthright of every family; and in ours in particular, there runs a tradition, that on one occasion of dividing goods and chattels, an old bullock happening to remain, it was killed and dressed upon the spot, the whole party feasting upon it and carrying away the fragments on their pack-saddles—and all this, too, when a house, paddock, and orchard were allotted to two instead of their share of six brood mares, with

the young men divided between themselves ; but then such mares ! More of this perhaps, however, by and by.

Well, I hope I have made it quite clear to the erudite reader that by the time my father found himself the richer by some half dozen of strapping boys, to say nothing of girls, he began to feel sorely puzzled what to do with them. Like Esau, he had sold his birthright to his brother, though for something better than a pot of porridge ; he had therefore no landed estate to depend upon. He had, however, so well managed his share of the patrimony, that after sojourning in foreign parts for some years he returned to England, whilst still young enough materially to improve his circumstances by marriage. But habits of indulgence, and, it may be, a little spice of family pride, on both sides, effectually prevented any other augmentation in my honoured parent's stock of comfort, excepting those which a crowded table affords ; and everybody knows, that when a Christmas pudding is made for fifteen, it must either be a very large one, or those who partake of it must be content with a genteel rather than a substantial slice. Now, this being the case at our board, it is

no marvel that my father, who had gone to London, and who was, what is vulgarly styled kicking his heels, one fine morning in the neighbourhood of Leadenhall Street, was a good deal gratified on finding himself accosted by a very old friend and school-fellow, who, he found, was a director in the India House. They had not met for thirty years, and almost the first inquiry which the warm-hearted gentleman made as to my father's situation and prospects led to the offer of a Cadetship for poor me, then a ragamuffin boy, whom neither all the pains which his mother bestowed upon him would ever keep what is called tidy, nor the liberal allowance of cane and birch, showered upon him by his master, awaken to any other contemplation than that of the best mode of sealing fences in search of the sour fruit that lay concealed behind them.

#### THE MAJOR'S CADETSHIP.

Never shall I forget the sensation created in our little circle when my father posted down with the welcome news, his ever cheerful countenance still more radiant with placid satisfaction that

even it was wont to be, and exclaiming as he alighted, "I've been offered a Cadetship for Fred, and may perhaps be able to do something for the others when they are old enough." My two elder brothers were already considered as disposed of; one was walking the hospitals in London, and the other studying at Oxford, with the view of succeeding to a living in the gift of one of my maternal uncles, which his consumptive son was expected shortly to resign. They were both absent, but I was within call, and a deputation of my sisters, and one urchin of a brother who was just old enough to comprehend that all this bustle portended something good to me, was sent to conduct me to the presence. My mother, as usual, scanned my appearance from head to foot, and told me to hold my head up as I entered the parlour; but my father, who had been away some time, greeted me warmly, and good humouredly pinching my ears said, "You little rogue, you, how would you like to be a soldier?" A soldier! what a grand sound (as of a trumpet) the word appeared to have as my father articulated it! He was none of those clippers of the King's English who pronounce it *sodger*; but it came from his



lips as if he thought it, (and he really did so,) synonymous with citizen,—a citizen too, who was pledged to do good fight whenever his services were called for. There was another reason for this, however, for besides being a very loyal subject, he had been brought up in strict subordination to his elder brethren, and as one of these held a high rank in the service, and shewed, moreover, by his deportment, the deep sense he entertained of that distinction, the “Sir” with which my father had never failed to address him, insensibly came to be considered as due even more to his military pretension than to family precedence.

With these feelings it may easily be imagined that my father was quite delighted, when in reply to his question, I exclaimed, “A soldier ! what ! like my uncle, papa ? Oh ! I should be so glad !” He cherished it as an omen of my future greatness, and told me that he was sure I should not only be like my uncle, but, added he, “as celebrated a man as your grandfather there,” pointing to the portrait of an elderly gentleman in a strange nondescript sort of dress, compounded of red, yellow, and blue, and standing in the third position, his left hand resting on

the hilt of his sword, his right hand being held akimbo, whilst with a complacent pair of blue eyes, he stole a side-long glance from under a full powdered wig, as if in the act of courting the admiration of all beholders. This, in fact, was the modern great man of the family. He was the son of one of those worthies whom I have mentioned above, as having been so anxious to keep up our breed of horses; and such had been his wealth in that article, that on the Pretender's expedition into England, he had raised a goodly troop of musketeers, and had made so formidable an appearance in the neighbourhood of Derby, that, in his opinion at least, the retreat of that harebrained adventurer was not entirely attributable to the discords of his Highland chieftains, as it was industriously reported at the time.

But, to return from this digression, the reader, who no doubt already takes considerable interest in my affairs, will be curious to know how it happened that I expressed so much satisfaction at the idea of becoming a soldier, when almost all I knew of that class was that they were generally dressed in red, and walked about the country accompanied by a drum and fife, giving ribbon

cockades to everybody who was inclined to accept them, and sometimes to those who were not. The truth, then, is—for it must be told—that in the general arrangements as to the settlement of his children, my father had originally designed me to be a sort of assistant, or co-partner, as the case might be, of my brother the intended doctor. I was to have been apprenticed to a chemist and druggist, or an apothecary, so as to be ready to enter upon my vocation as soon as my brother began to get into practice ; and we were to play into each other's hands, something in the manner of partners at whist, he having all the honours and I the playing cards ; but the cruel taunts and sarcasms of my school-fellows in consequence of my pestle and mortar destination, added to the fearful epithet of half-starved, which they never failed to prefix to the word apothecary, made my existence at school perfectly miserable, and filled my mind with the most gloomy forebodings. It was, therefore, with feelings approaching to rapture, that I heard my father announce the contemplated change, for, besides that change of any kind is always pleasing to young people, I hailed it as a relief from persecution,—a sentiment which I have

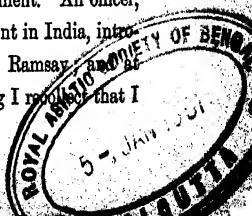
lived long enough to know is one of the most delightful of which poor mortals are susceptible.

## THE VOYAGE TO INDIA.

One sea voyage is so like another that I cannot venture to hope that mine, were I to relate it, would furnish anything of a very novel or entertaining description. I shall therefore pass it over as quickly as possible, and content myself merely with recording that, like most young men in similar circumstances, I went on board with a very magnanimous resolution to read and study during the whole passage, and like most, I forgot that resolution before I was recovered from the discomforts of the Bay of Biscay. Let it not be imagined, however, that I was domiciled for so long a period as four months with the odd variety of character which is usually to be met with around the cuddy table of a large Indiaman, without deriving from it something in the way both of instruction and improvement. An officer, belonging to a Highland regiment in India, introduced me to Burns and Allan Ramsay, and at that early period of my reading I recollect that I

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greatly preferred the latter. Pastorals were in a manner quite new to me : Of Theocritus I knew nothing ; and as to those of Virgil, I had read them as lessons, and could repeat some few lines by rote,—but as compositions of the mind, as delineations of life and manners, I had no idea of them whatever. In Allan Ramsay, on the contrary, everything in his “ Gentle Shepherd ” seemed to flow so naturally from the situation in which the parties are placed, that when read to me in the accent of my Scotch friend, who was wonderfully patient in explaining to me such words and phrases as I could not at first understand, I could almost imagine it to be the unsophisticated language of pastoral life, recorded by the poet without any other effort than that of writing it down from the mouths of the speakers. Even that occasional coarseness and vulgarity which our northern friends are sometimes apt to consider as wit and humour entirely escaped me ; and if I have since been made more sensible of this point as a distinguishing national characteristic, it is more from my having seen a good deal of Scotch society, both at home and abroad, than from any very extensive study of Scotch literature. But

a truce to this criticism. I learnt other things besides reading poetry. The second officer of the ship observing me to be very solicitous about a certain bag of Spanish dollars which was stowed away in my sea-chest, very kindly undertook to teach me how to play at hazard. The consequence may easily be imagined; the big chest was sent for much more frequently than heretofore; but there was no difficulty in getting it up from the hold, as my friend, the second officer, always interested himself in my behalf. My dollars, however, decreased rapidly; for though I was encouraged to hope that every successive visit I paid to the sacred hoard was only to take away just enough to enable me to win back what I had lost, yet it so happened that the event always fell out differently. My bag was already contracted to about half its original span, but such was my ardent turn of mind, that I thought not for a moment of distrusting my fortune, and in all probability I should have continued to send the dollars I still retained in search of those which my friend had eased me of, if I had not, very fortunately, overheard him exulting in anticipation at his having so easily made himself master

of my whole store. This brought me to a stand immediately; and the embarrassing doubt occurred to me whether I was a dupe and he a scoundrel, or merely that he was a clever fellow, and I at least an inexperienced one. The point was difficult to decide, for there was a great deal to be said on both sides; but the doubt saved my remaining dollars; and the ill humour of the second officer, when he found that I steadily declined his invitations to take a lounge in his cabin, seemed to shew that he had counted with greater certainty upon his success than the turns of a game of chance ought to have authorized him to do. And yet, perhaps, I do him injustice; he may possibly have derived his success entirely from a patient and long attention to the doctrine of chances. But still, turn the matter how I can, there does appear to me such a combination of meanness and dishonesty in sitting down to play with a man, ostensibly on equal terms, and then putting in practice a concocted store of carefully assorted experience in order literally to rob him of his money, that I have ever since considered a professional gambler as a thief, who, wanting courage to attack you on the highway, resorts to

the more secure but dastardly practice of picking your pocket.

## CALCUTTA IN 1803.

To a man arriving from England, in the midst of the rainy season, the first appearance of few places in the world could impress the mind with a more fearful mixture of surprise and gloom than Calcutta at such a period. In the hot season it is bad enough, to alarm the new comer, but in the rainy it is worse. It is, at first at least, quite terrific. In these respects—I mean with regard to the frightful nature of two out of our three Indian seasons—the city of palaces reminds us of the commencement of Johnson's *Rasselas*, where he describes the feelings of the Prince of Abyssinia in the Happy Valley. When its gates are, as it were, thrown open at the beginning of the cold season, all is mirth and gaiety and happiness, every one brings himself to imagine that such delight must be perpetual, and only regrets his inability to remain and pass his life in so agreeable a retirement. But no sooner have our visitors departed, than he who



yearns after the healthful and exhilarating exercise of body and mind, from which, during the remainder of the year, he is almost entirely debarred in this ungenial clime, begins to find the intermediate seasons tedious and gloomy ;—" he discovers within himself no power of perception which is not glutted with its proper pleasure, and yet he does not feel himself delighted. He has some latent sense for which this place affords no gratification, or he has some desires, distinct from sense, which must be satisfied before he can be happy."

This first impression, which I have endeavoured to describe, is solely the effect of contrast. Arriving off Madras in the month of July, the weather, to us at least, was delightful, and our onward passage up the Bay of Bengal was particularly smooth and agreeable. A south-westerly breeze, whilst it wafted the ship along at a prodigious rate, kept the air at a refreshing temperature, and scarcely a cloud was to be seen till we had passed the Sand Heads, and penetrated into the bowels of the land, as far as Diamond Harbour. But no sooner was I fairly landed upon the bosom of the river, than everything appeared to change. A sultry, moist, and steamy atmosphere led me

almost to imagine that I was voyaging on the Phlegethon, instead of the Hoogly—and the rain descended in such deluges, accompanied by such vivid flashes of lightning, and awfully loud peals of thunder, as to add to the illusion, and make me believe that if not already in the infernal regions, I was at least on the high road towards them. A storm of this description assailed the boat in which I proceeded from the ship to Calcutta, just as we arrived at the wharf, and it was some hours before we could attempt to land. I had prepared myself to leap on shore, but the weather loured so fearfully that I was constrained to re-seat myself; and the boatmen, after securing a hold upon the bank, which operation seemed to be one of no small difficulty, came running into my little cabin with such an appearance of dismay, that I thought the crashing of the elements was as strange and unexpected to them as it was to myself. Their almost naked condition, together with their awe-stricken countenances, and shivering, timid deportment, affected me with the liveliest sensations of pity, and I made room for them in my confined apartment with unfeigned commiseration for the combina-

tion of wretchedness and ignorance which their whole behaviour so clearly indicated. I regretted nothing more than my inability to speak their language, for I might otherwise have assuaged their fears, by explaining the phenomena of thunder and lightning, and, besides exhorting them to rely upon Providence for their safety, taught them the most prudent method of conducting themselves so as to lessen the chance of their coming in contact with the electric fluid. But this admirable opportunity of philosophizing was quite lost to me, and I had good reason to regret the circumstance ; for in my anxiety to afford the crew of my little boat all possible shelter from the inclemency of the weather, I forgot that my purse was lying upon my sea-chest, which had served me for a table,—and when the rain had ceased, and I prepared to land, it was nowhere to be found ! Doubtless, if I could have spoken their language, and shewn myself willing to instruct those poor boatmen, they, in return, would have requited me by taking care of my property ; but as it was, they could not read my thoughts, and believing, no doubt, that I cared nothing about them, they

gave themselves no concern about my unhappy purse.

This, I must confess, was what is called a damper on my first appearance in Calcutta ; but I did not immediately suffer any inconvenience from my mishap, for almost the instant I set my foot on shore, I was accosted by some very well-dressed natives, apparently of a superior class, who obligingly offered to shew me to the best house for the accommodation of strangers, to take charge of my luggage, and even to pay my boatmen. They all spoke English with the utmost volubility ; fluency seems to me to be a term too weak to express that union of rapidity and copiousness which their language exhibited. They behaved towards me with the most engaging frankness and good humour, as if they had long known me, at least by character, but at the same time they were so respectful in their demeanour, that the high-sounding titles with which they greeted me, seemed only to be the natural consequence of the impression which my dignified presence had made upon their minds—and far, very far from that cringing servility which I had been taught to expect from the natives of India.

In spite of my better judgment, I could not help believing that I had arrived in a country where the character and complexion of an Englishman were sure passports to rank and distinction. My new friends, it is true, were, under any supposable case, a little inclined to hyperbole, but this I attributed to the genius of their language; for after all, said I, they are speaking in a foreign tongue, and do but translate the thoughts which occur to their oriental imaginations. Sometimes, indeed, I was tempted to interrupt them, and to exclaim, "Really, my good Sirs, you quite mistake me, I am no Lord, but only a simple Cadet." I do not know how it is, but there is such a natural feeling of pleasure at being rated above our real condition,—it seems so clearly to point out, that the discerning few, at least, are more just towards us than Dame Fortune has thought proper to be, that I gave up the project as useless, and suffered myself, with all my blushing honours full about me, to be quietly marshalled to my temporary residence at Parr's Hotel, the very respectable designation by which a shabby curry-coloured house at the corner of Clive Street was then known.

Here, however, my adventitious rank forsook me as suddenly as it had been obtained. I again became plain *Mister*. My late flatterers, I found, were employés in the service of the tavern-keeper ; and their gratuitous kindness in loading themselves with my greatcoat, bundle, &c., and in procuring porters for the rest of my baggage, was afterwards acknowledged by him in the most commendably liberal manner when he presented his bill on my quitting his hospitable roof. How long it was before this occurred, or how my time passed whilst in this Circean abode, I have now little recollection—eating, drinking, and billiards, I believe, filled up the entire day. Fortunately for us all—for there were several other young men at the tavern who had arrived about the same time with myself—the demon Cholera was then unknown, or how we could possibly have escaped him it is difficult to conjecture. Fruits of all kinds, and at all hours, ripe, unripe, and over-ripe,—liquor of every sort that our inclination or vanity prompted us to call for at meals,—and a most abominable compound of villanous Madeira, sugar and lime juice, called Sangaree, all day long ! In this horrible place I must have re-

mained three or four days, when our host, who was a discreet man, observing by sundry symptoms, not to be mistaken by a practised eye such as his, that our purses were becoming rather low, suggested, of his own accord, the expediency of our looking out for other quarters. To the military heroes, in particular, he recommended an immediate visit to the Town-Major of Fort-William, and I accordingly, accompanied by a Cadet who was destined for the cavalry, proceeded to the Calcutta gateway of the Fort, having first discharged my bill, and procured the escort of one of the tavern-keeper's people for the protection of our baggage, which in the long line which it made in attempting to keep pace with our palanquins, formed a very characteristic procession as we passed through the town and across the esplanade.

#### FORT-WILLIAM—CADET ACCOMMODATION.

When we reached the Calcutta gateway of the Fort, and inquired for the Town-Major, we were shewn into a tolerably spacious apartment, in the centre of which, under a punkah, sat a pale looking person at his writing-desk, so absorbed in the

business before him that he did not raise his eyes from the paper for several minutes after we had been announced. Doubtless, we thought, he was penning an important despatch, and we therefore stood very meekly before him waiting, cap in hand, till he had leisure to attend us. At length, having come to a pause in his work, he turned briskly to us, and fixing his eyes upon my companion, who happened to be nearest to him, "And, pray Sir," said he in no very agreeable tone, "what may your business be?" We made our bows, and telling him we were Cadets, gave him our papers, and said we had been recommended to apply to him for quarters in the Fort. "Ay; very well," was the reply; and calling somebody in attendance by his name, "Here, take them to Captain Blunt;" then making an almost imperceptible inclination of his head to our second bow and "thank you, Sir," he resumed his penmanship. By this time the reader will no doubt have anticipated that the individual who had favoured us with this brief audience was no other than Colonel Calcraft, the Town-Major; but he is mistaken; it was a much greater personage. "The Colonel must have a great deal to do," said



I to the Serjeant who was conducting us down stairs ; “ he looked very pale, I thought.” “ The Colonel !” said the man ; “ why, Lord bless your honour, that was nobody but our Serjeant-Major Jones, though, to be sure, he rides it with as high a hand as the Governor himself.” “ A Serjeant-Major !” said my companion, who was a choleric little man, and had, moreover, hinted to us that this was not his first appearance in the military profession ;—“ a Serjeant-Major ! the scoundrel ! I’ll go back and lay my whip across his shoulders for his impertinence.” I, however, who thought his anger very unreasonable, having, in fact, no very distinct notion of the difference between a Serjeant-Major and a Town-Major, did all I could to pacify him, and luckily succeeded, or heaven knows what might have been the consequence, for Jones was the Colonel’s right hand man, and any violence offered to him could not have failed to be deeply resented.

To Captain Blunt, the barrack-master, then, we suffered ourselves quietly to be conducted ; a little sallow, cross, but sharp-looking man, who kept his office in a miserable bomb-proof under the north barrack. This gentleman was a little, and only a

little, more civil than our friend the staff-serjeant ; and my companion, either smarting under his recent mortification, or possibly thinking he had the same description of person to deal with, assumed a manner by no means calculated to conciliate his good will. It was to this circumstance, perhaps, that we owed our both being crammed into one room in the south barrack instead of each having a room to himself. A key-serjeant was ordered to conduct us to our abode ; and by the mode in which he fulfilled his commission—walking before us with a native carrying a huge bunch of keys at his elbow—we had very much the appearance of runaway youths who had just been apprehended, and consigned to the house of correction.

At length, however, we were deposited within the four bare badly whitewashed walls of our desolate apartment. We had not an article of furniture ; but by means of our large sea-chests and one of our cots, we could manage to arrange one decent bed—the other cot being placed on the floor, as the only available position for it ; and during the day our chests were to serve us as both tables and chairs. When the bearers and coolies,

who had assisted us in these operations, had disappeared, we sat down to enjoy our independence with much the same sort of feeling that Alexander Selkirk must have experienced when, though monarch of all he surveyed, he did not exactly know where to get a dinner. The exertion we had gone through, together with the length of time that had elapsed since our breakfast, produced a sensation of hunger which we were at a loss how to appease; the libations of Sangaree, and the ever-laden side-board of the tavern, which had rather created our wants than satisfied them, were now no longer within our reach, and how to supply their place we were utterly unacquainted. In this very agreeable predicament we bethought ourselves of looking out upon the veranda of the barrack in search of somebody who might at least be able to tell us if any eating-house or pastry-cook shop was in the neighbourhood, for we possessed some little money, if we could only find where to exchange it for something better calculated to keep body and soul together. But we were not long kept in suspense on this head. At our door we discovered a man who had apparently followed us to our new abode in the expectation

of being taken into service ; he spoke English well enough to make himself understood in essentials, and in reply to our inquiries did not hesitate to promise us all we required, almost without the trouble of cooking. Delightful news ! We were surely the fortunate possessors of Aladdin's lamp ; and in a space of time, which even to our craving appetites did not seem long, some of the most savoury dishes I ever recollect to have tasted of were placed before us—kid chops, a grilled fowl, and a Bombay pudding, redolent with butter and brown sugar !—add to these potatoes, which we did not think necessary to scrutinize too closely, and bread so soft and spongy that we imagined our good genius had commissioned the newest French rolls expressly for our accommodation. What he gave us to drink I really cannot now recollect ; but it was no doubt of excellent flavour, for even at this distant period, I can recall to my mind the happy and contented feeling with which we lay down after our repast, and the speed with which our conversation on the military renown we might be destined to acquire, gave place to the most profound slumber.

How long we continued in this situation I know

not ; but the sun was in the east when we awoke, and as it had been rapidly descending when we sat down to our dinner, it required no great stretch of the reasoning faculty to conclude that we had slept through the whole night. Still we had evidently overlooked the forms usually attendant upon the operation of going to bed—we were completely dressed ; and this circumstance alone was sufficient to occasion no small degree of puzzlement to us. “ What’s o’clock ? ” said my companion. I pulled out my watch, but it had stopped ! “ What does yours say ? ” I asked. He looked a little embarrassed, and then turning pale as death, replied in a stifled tone, “ I can’t find it—it’s gone !—and my brooch too ; and,” dropping his hands upon his pockets, “ my purse with them ! ” The truth instantly flashed upon us. The good genius who, at our bidding, had so quickly furnished out our feast of the preceding evening, had dissolved the enchantment by paying himself with my friend’s trinkets, and had taken leave of our service. In some measure to palliate his crime, however, I must here mention, that my companion, upon whom almost the whole loss had fallen, was what was then styled a great blood, (the term *dandy* is

a modern barbarism, without point or meaning ; whereas *blood* was appropriate, for it clearly indicated that though the breed might be good in other respects, it certainly wanted *bottom*.) He was somewhat older than was then usual among Cadets, and had evidently seen a good deal of the world ; his talk was that of a man who had been accustomed to a certain degree of splendour, and I longed to see him fairly settled, if it were only to have an opportunity of admiring the liveries into which he proposed putting his servant, and the fine stud of horses with which he was to provide himself. Every night he used to take off a hair chain which he wore round his neck, and to which a handsome gold brooch was attached—an evidence, he hinted, of his *bonnes fortunes* ; this, together with his watch and seals, which were also very handsome, and his purse, he used to deposit by his bedside, close to a huge cavalry sword which he had brought out with him, and which he would now and then speak of as if it were a weapon familiar to his arm, although he would add, with an attempt at sighing, he was now only a Cadet. Some of us at the tavern had more than once advised him to place his valuables under his pillow ; but his

answer had always been, "Nonsense, I should like to see the fellow who would dare to touch any of them when that good sword is lying close to them, and within my reach." And sure enough it was, that at the tavern he never missed anything; but in the Fort, it unfortunately turned out differently—I suppose because its inhabitants were more accustomed to the sight of warlike instruments than the more peaceable inmates of the city—or perhaps in the arrangement which I have described, and which had been adopted from habit even on the night in question, the array of gold and silver was so great as to throw into the shade the mere parade of cold iron in the cavalry sword, which, if I remember rightly, was not drawn—or, it is not impossible, the servant, when he returned early in the morning to prepare our breakfast, may have been too weak to withstand the temptation before him, and only refrained from taking the sword itself, because it was less easily to be disposed of. Certain it is, he took nothing but the trinkets—our writing desks were safe; but unhappily they contained no riches, for, relying on my friend's superior experience, I had given the little money that remained to me into

his charge, and we had agreed to live together and make common purse, under his management, until we were sent to our respective regiments.

What was now to be done? On going into the veranda to inquire for our departed genius, the people who sat at their masters' doors, as if alarmed at our vehemence, refused to answer any of our questions, and several of them ran away as fast as their legs could carry them. In short, we could obtain no information whatever, and were obliged to return to our miserable apartment to reflect upon the best mode of remedying our misfortune. By this time, however, it was growing late, and my stomach, as honest Sancho hath it, began very urgently to cry "cupboard;" and although neither cash nor domestic could be found, it was some alleviation of my misery that the fragments of our late collation remained just as they had been left the night before. The nondescript knives and forks, &c., with which we had been furnished from the commissariat of Welsh and Stalker of Cheapside, under the name of a canteen, were there, and so were our horn mugs, and the wretched crockery which our servant had made a shift to procure. For the moment, therefore, we had reason to be



thankful that matters were no worse ; and, making a merit of necessity, I attacked the residue of our loaves, and endeavoured to find them as delicious as they had been the previous night, slaking my thirst with a fluid which, though nothing but water, did not quite deserve the epithet *crystal*, which the admirers of the pure element are so fond of bestowing upon it. During this time, and notwithstanding all my praises, I could not persuade my poor friend to take a morsel. He said he was not hungry, and I, sincerely commiserating his misfortune, so much greater than my own, resolved not to press him, but to place everything within his view, so as to tempt him, (Heaven knows the temptation, in this instance at least, was not overpowering,) as soon as his mind should be more at ease. But, in the course of the day, he became worse, and I——, shall I confess it ? Oh, human nature, what scurvy tricks thou makest us play one another !—I actually felt no inconsiderable consolation that, under these circumstances, the remainder of our provender would enable me once again to satisfy the cravings of my appetite, which, had my friend been able to partake of it, would by no means have been the

case. Towards the evening, however, things began to assume a more serious aspect—my friend was in a raging fever, and I, believing him to be at the point of death, again sallied out of our den, and by dint of repeating, “Doctor, Doctor,” to everybody I saw, got myself shewn to the quarters of the garrison assistant-surgeon, Dr. Cheese, which, after all, were almost next door to us. This gentleman was just stepping out of his buggy on his return from visiting his patients, and very good-humouredly told me to lead the way to my friend’s room. The examination was a very short one; and it was with the feelings almost of a culprit, who is acquitted of a crime of which he feels conscious he is guilty, that I heard the medical gentleman’s opinion that the case was not at all dangerous; for, in my anxiety, I had begun to imagine that my poor companion was dying as much from starvation as from any other cause. On this latter score, however, my mind was so completely set at ease, that when the doctor went away, telling me he would send some medicine for the sick man, I, without scruple, attacked the slender remnants of our store, and despatched them even to the very bones—betaking myself to rest

with an easy conscience, quite unmindful of what the morrow might produce.

In the morning the good doctor made his appearance early ; but as my repast of the night before had been light, so had my slumbers, and I was up and quite ready to receive him. He pronounced his patient much better, and told me I had nothing to do but to get him some nice chicken broth and a little toast at twelve o'clock. He might as well have told me to get him a carriage and four with a couple of out-riders ! and I looked, as may well be supposed, a little confused, which the doctor observing, he told me to call my servant, with a view, I suppose, of explaining to him what was required ; but before I had time to answer, he exclaimed, looking round the room, " Why, you've neither table, nor chair, nor bed—how is this ?" The truth then was forced from me, and I told him that not only had we none of those things, but no servant nor anything with which to procure a single meal. He appeared to be quite astonished at hearing it, and that we had been literally four-and-twenty hours in this forlorn condition ! " Good Heaven !" he exclaimed, " is it possible ?" And telling my friend he would

send him something directly, "Come you along with me," said he, taking me by the arm—and away we trudged to his quarters, where, after giving some directions to his servants, which I could not understand, he invited me to partake of a capital breakfast, in company with two or three gentlemen, guests, apparently, but not strangers like myself. From one of the latter, a gentleman who seemed to be perfectly at home in his position, I had to undergo a species of cross-examination, which compelled me to prate rather copiously of my "whereabouts," and lay open the whole extent of the misfortune that had just occurred to my friend and myself. In the simplicity of my heart I expected condolence, at least, if not offers of assistance, from the individual who seemed to take such an interest in all that concerned me—but I was disappointed. As soon as my tale was over, he burst into a loud fit of laughter, exclaiming at intervals, "Capital! capital! properly griffed, by Jove,"—an expression which I afterwards found to indicate that all new-comers were expected to endure a regular course of tricks and roguery of all descriptions as the dearly-bought experience of the first year of their novitiate in India.

When breakfast was over, the good doctor immediately rose to recommence the business of the day, which, in truth, appeared to leave him scarcely a moment to himself; but before going out he took me kindly by the hand, and told me that I and my friend would always find something to eat at his house, and that he hoped we would not fail to come at all times when not otherwise engaged.—Engaged? kind, generous soul! He knew that no engagement was likely to interfere with our acceptance of his invitation, but the natural delicacy of his mind suggested the expression in order to spare our feelings. I thanked him in the best language I could command, for, to say the truth, although I was then too giddy to be easily overcome by so much kindness, I found my feelings at the moment too big for utterance, and then hastened home to tell my companion of our good fortune. But there a new scene of enchantment awaited me. I found the room put into very comfortable order, with a sort of cotton carpet called a *satringee*, spread upon the floor, and furnished with two neat beds, some chairs, and a table, at which my friend was seated with a handsome tray before him, containing everything

he required, and, moreover, such a display of plate, that I could not help telling him not to neglect to draw his sword this time if he intended it to guard the property during the night,—a joke which he at first was not inclined to take good humouredly ; but returning health, and a good meal, are wonderful sweeteners of the temper, and he soon began to bear his misfortune with becoming fortitude.

When I sat down to pen these reminiscences I determined to name as few persons as possible, from an apprehension of shocking the delicacy, or in any way offending the feelings of those concerned ; but in this commencement of my career, what have I to fear on those accounts ? What is the early biography of a quasi-sexagenarian but a register of deaths, a lengthened obituary ! The kind mortal, whose assistance in the hour of need I have just been recording, has long since departed from this world ; but who is there, who was in Calcutta between the years 1798 and 1804, who does not recollect, and who does not delight to call to his mind the image of Michael Cheese ? “The good Samaritan,” as he is appropriately styled on the monument erected to his memory in

Saint John's Cathedral. He was the most unostentatiously kind man I have ever met with, and so invariably cheerful withal, that the very appearance of his smiling countenance was almost enough to chase away pain and anxiety from the sick man's couch. His practice was most extensive, and, as I have been informed, his gratuitous attendance was so widely given, that when he died, old and young, rich and poor, European and native, joined with one accord in lamenting his loss, and there was scarcely a family in Calcutta that did not mourn for him as a friend, if not as a benefactor.

Here I am sensible I ought to close this chapter of my memoirs, but I am unwilling to do so without reminding the reader that the danger of starvation, from which I so narrowly escaped, (and one case at least of a Cadet dying from actual want occurred in Fort-William, as I am told, a few years after the period alluded to,) "has now become a tale but little known." Arrangements were adopted under Lord Amherst's government in 1824, by which Cadets on their arrival are immediately placed under the care of a responsible officer, who attends to all their comforts, and

superintends the provision of a suitable outfit to enable them to join the corps to which they are posted. This at least was one improvement in a service which its maligners so industriously described at that time as growing worse and worse every day. An attempt was made at an earlier period to provide special accommodation for the Cadets arriving from England, and this reminds me to give some account of

THE CADET ESTABLISHMENT AT BARASETT,  
(BENGAL.)

It was a strange place that Barasett. If the Governor-General of the time being, with the best aid of the Commander-in-Chief, the Members of Council, the whole Secretaries, and the chiefs and big wigs of all departments into the bargain, had assembled in solemn conclave for the one purpose of devising how best to bring ruin and demoralization into the ranks of the young and inexperienced on their first arrival as Cadets in this country, the chances are ten to one if they could have fallen upon so sure, safe, and expeditious a plan of eradicating all good, and instilling every evil, as that same precious institution of Barasett.



It was a regular Asiatic hot-bed of ruin and mischief. And yet, doubtless, could one only see the minutes of Government, with the elaborate explanation provided in the despatches of that day, for the information of the home authorities on its first establishment, we should assuredly light upon the usual be-praisings of a new plan, the vaunted anticipations of future benefit to the service, with all the changes officially rung on the cabalistic promises of advantage to the State, economy to the Government, and efficiency for the army. We should see announced the fledged production of admirable linguists, eminent officers, and valuable public servants, in fact, all the bright shewings of one side of a question so needful to induce superiors to sanction a job. And the job was of some importance too ; it was to give to the Government of Bengal the means of nominating three or four staff-friends to fat appointments, with the distribution of some thousands of rupees monthly, in the shape of rent, salaries, and establishments.

The crowd of officers who have passed through the fiery ordeal of Barasett is now fast disappearing from the Bengal army, not a tithe, probably,

of its existing members know aught regarding such an institution ; and many of the elders among the field-officers, and grey-headed captains, remember it only as a dream of their youth, and think of its ancient scenes of riot, and wildness, and folly, but as portions of their boyhood, and as part and parcel of their school-day recollections. But that such a place had once a prominent being in the vicinity of Calcutta, and was the subject of more apprehensive discussion and alarm to the high functionaries in any way responsible for it, than half the other establishments of the army put together, is a fact which the old records of the adjutant-general's office can well testify, and regarding which many poor devils of victims to its ills are yet alive to bear unhappy witness.

About fifteen miles from the Government House of Calcutta, and about seven from Dum-Dum, arose a few brick and chunam residences, beside a small sequestered village, embowered, as it were, in a series of surrounding groups of large tamarind, lime, mango, and other trees of this part of Bengal. It was an agreeable retirement from the bustle of Calcutta, possessing the advantage of being so located that the owner could manage to

superintend several small indigo works in its neighbourhood, and at the same time avail himself of daily intercourse, if necessary, with the metropolis of British India. It was to this spot that Government directed its attention as a convenient place in which to establish a military college or institution for the reception of Cadets on their arrival in India. Young candidates for military fame in India were here to acquire a knowledge of its vernacular language, with a fitting smattering of drill and daily parade duty. And so essential did these high qualifications seem in the eyes of the founders of the institution, that they were thought to be cheaply purchased by the outlay of some lacs of rupees, and the risk and danger of bringing together two or three hundred heedless boys in the hot blood of untrammelled youth, just released from the wholesome restraints and still necessary supervision of their late parents and guardians. To secure this place itself a high monthly rent was granted to the proprietor, on the condition of his erecting barracks, with other sufficient accommodation, for the officers and staff. And the early part of the present century soon witnessed the secluded and pleasing retreat we have described.

converted into a nursery of riot and diablerie, under the aristocratic title of "Institution for Gentlemen Cadets."

The establishment itself was composed of an elderly officer, as commandant or head school-master,—a second in command, who was also a professor or teacher of Hindoostance,—and a couple of subaltern officers, likewise professors, while one of the latter acted as adjutant of the Cadet company, and the drill superintendent of the military tyros. As soon as Cadets arrived from England in the different ships, which were then in the habit of coming out in fleets of ten or twelve Indiamen to avoid the French cruisers, so formidable to the Honourable Company's trading vessels, the Cadets, to the number of a few score at a time, were handed over to the Cadet Institution. They were directed by the town-major to betake themselves at once to Barasett, and palankeens were supplied at the public expense to carry them off, as early as practicable, from the taverns, and other temptations of the metropolis. Many, however, contrived to linger behind in town, to have a few days of fun at Cadit Flouet's, a well-known punch house of

that day ; but the others, rather more quietly disposed, were soon at Barasett—to the horror of a few of them, on their first reaching the pandemonium it presented.

It was there, after the riotous salutation first awaiting them, and their prompt initiation into the not unfrequent orgies of the place, they were consigned over to the custody of the sergeant-major. A barrack-room, or a portion of a room, was allotted them, according to the crowded state or otherwise of the Cadet company, and soon amid the “awkward squad” they were taught the goose <sup>step</sup>, and seduced into the erudite mysteries of “right face,” “left turn,” and other great rudiments of the drill. After much dire preliminary marching and counter-marching without arms, they were promoted to the dignity of handling an old artillery fusil, until tolerably well drilled into its use and exercise. All this occupied the mornings and evenings ; in the day time, the young gentlemen had to attend classes, or lectures as they were called ; but though the professors could enforce the attendance of all, it was a task beyond them to ensure attention to anything like study ; and thus the presence of

four-fifths of the youngsters at class, in spite of the kindness and exertion of the teachers, was a mere farce, a practical exemplification of "Love's labour lost"—or a more free and easy periodical exhibition of "As you like it." Scarcely a youngster dreamed of serious application. Ponies, terriers, pariah dogs, shooting, sauntering about the barracks, smoking, drinking, gaming, and much worse amusements formed the sole occupation of the many. Picture to yourself two hundred or more tall strapping youths of eighteen or nineteen, of all possible dispositions and pursuits, at the very age of all others for reckless disregard of prudence and of consideration for the future; fancy these boys crowded together in a new country—in a bewildering and exciting climate, with no immediate check on their humours or ebullitions, and roaming about the noisy barracks, at a mile's distance from the officers of the Institution, and you may conjure up some idea of the daily row and riot of the place. On one side might be seen collected a turbulent group surrounding some unfortunate bill-sircar, who had brought a few bills in master's name, from certain stable-keepers or tailors in Calcutta. The

bills were at once snatched from his trembling grasp, and then opened and handed round for the edification of the group. Soon the documents were tossed about or flung in the air, for the amusement of beholding the terror and alarm of the bill-sircar. But see, a few of them are actually torn in the increasing riot and excitement of the moment; in vain the sircar protests, begs, and implores; all the bills are, by this time, in tatters, and an unlucky voice has suggested the propriety of "ducking the dun" in a neighbouring tank. With a shout, the agitated bill deliverer is borne away from the earth, uplifted by the arms and legs, and in a few moments is struggling and gasping away, in the muddy waters of the pitiless tank, half drowned, amid the cries, and yells, and exultations of his seeming fiendish tormentors! A little to the left another party are baiting a jackal, which has been tied to a stake. Half a hundred ill-bred curs and half-Anglicised pariahs are barking around him, and yelping and snapping at their dreaded victim as their owners are "stirring him up with a long pole," and giving the devoted jackal sundry cruel thumps with brick-bats and other missives to give

him energy and animation. At last a single terrier rushes into the ring. He flies at the beast, amid shouts of admiration that make the barracks ring again. The terrier is discomfited. Taunts, jeers, and angry exclamations are the order of the day—dog after dog is seized up, and thrown in upon the prey, who braves them all ; but a heavy brick-bat has floored him, and at once fifty rank curs rush on the momentarily disabled victim. He is torn, and dragged, and shaken, and gnawed at ; while the *sportsmen* around yell, and yoick, whoop, and tally ho, and exultation peals around, as though a Badajos had surrendered, or a Bengal tiger had fallen before them. Similar feats of prowess—the fighting of a few well-spurred cocks, the backing of a kicking and obstinate tattoo, the firing at kites and crows flying hurriedly and screamingly in the air above, the reports of pistols, the blasts of ten mail-coach horns, and the practising upon copper bugles—these, and a dozen other recreations of a like nature, but all, all of them noisy and uproarious, formed the pleasing pursuits and avocations of the young gentlemen at the amiable Institution I have been describing. No wonder that study was not the idol of their adoration.



Many were the serious evils, however, arising from the congregating of so many young and thoughtless individuals together. Even the steady and well-disposed were partly carried down with the stream, and though perhaps uninjured in the main, and not much deteriorated by the bad examples ever before them, still they were not improved by them. There is a certain polish and sheen which cannot bear any coarse contact whatever, and there is a delicacy in some youthful minds—a purity of feeling which it is best to keep ever apart and unacquainted even with the coarseness and contamination of baser companions. It must not be supposed that, among the crowds of Cadets, there were not some who did not escape the ordeal with credit; but they had to contend with much that was displeasing, and the very struggle and opposition they had to make was far from beneficial. They did not join in the turmoil and folly ever around them. They studied the native language, it is true, and left the Institution in a few months; but they had witnessed what had better have been unknown to them—and, though they came off victorious, they carried away with them somewhat of the stain, and dust, and

soiling of the conflict. But if these were unimproved by Barasett, what must have been the fate of the unwary, the thoughtless, the yielding, and too facile of the number so early exposed? Debt and extravagance were the least of the evils they fell into; habits of drinking, coarseness of language and demeanour, love of low sport and vulgar amusements, were the good fruits of the place; while, to crown all, gaming, and a want of principle in pecuniary transactions, were so engendered and confirmed by the exposure, that the effects remained for life, and debased for ever the future career of the thoughtless victim. It was a wise awakening of the authorities at head quarters, when, roused by the ill success of their institution, by the ruin of many promising young men, the premature deaths of not a few, and the disgrace and shame that overtook no mean portion of the crowd of unfortunate youths then exposed, bringing some to the bar of the Supreme Court, and others into the debtors' jail, and *all* into disrepute, they at length determined, in the middle of 1811, to break up the college and disperse the entire establishment.

Barasett was accordingly suppressed, and Cadets

thenceforward sent at once to their corps, where, under the eye of their seniors, they soon fell into the manners and demeanour of more fitting examples, while the riots and disturbances, before marking the career of the juniors of the Indian service, became unheard of and unknown.

## CHAPTER II.

THE INAUGURATION OF A YOUNG SOLDIER—THE SEPOYS OF THE TIME—THE EUROPEAN OFFICERS—POWDER AND PIGTAILS—THE GANGES AND ITS BANKS—A VOYAGE TO CAWNPORE—AGRA—INCOMPETENT COMMANDERS—MONSON'S RETREAT—MAHOMMEDAN ARCHITECTURE—THE MOGUL EMPERORS.

It is not my intention to dwell much upon the incidents attendant on my first residence in Calcutta. They included a fair proportion of riot and profusion, but nothing recurs to my memory the relation of which could be either amusing or profitable to the reader. I very soon gained a number of acquaintances, some useful, some quite the reverse, and some about midway between those extremes. Among the latter I am inclined to reckon that convenient personage known by the name of a Sircar. This man, with a prudent advertence to the actual amount of my pay and prospects, abstained from advancing too much ready money, but he so contrived it that, by furnishing me with various little articles as I re-

quired them, he hampered me with a debt\* which I did not get rid of for several years. By his assistance, however, I was enabled to sport my hot tiffins and to frequent the Buildings\* and billiard tables, two places about equally advantageous to a young man in those days. In short, I lived almost at free quarters in Calcutta and its neighbourhood; for at the period of my arrival in India, military arrangements of every kind were so imperfect that many months elapsed before a young officer was appointed to a corps. The Mahratta war of 1803 had commenced, and General Lake, the commander-in-chief, was beyond the frontier. It was five months before any notice was taken of me, but at the end of that period I was appointed to do duty with a regiment at Barrackpore. There I entered a completely new world as it were, though even there pleasure seemed to be the order of the day. The duty of the battalion was managed almost entirely between the adjutant and the serjeant-major, to whom, sometimes, an officer of the day was added; but parades and exercise for

\* Writer's Buildings,—a row of dwellings occupied by the young civilians of Calcutta, where sacrifices to Bacchus were more frequent than offerings to the god of letters.

the whole of the officers seldom occurred, excepting in the cold weather, and then only occasionally. Yet the men, it is universally acknowledged, were never in finer order—and such men too! it was quite a sight to observe their fine statures, erect gait, broad and ample chests, and well-turned arms; their lower extremities, though not deficient in muscle, were less remarkable for symmetry, in consequence of the custom, common, I believe, to natives of all ranks, of sitting, or, I should rather say, squatting, on the hams,—a position which necessarily draws up the calves of the legs, and presses them outward, so as to give a man, who in every other respect is quite a model in shape, the appearance of being what is called bow-legged in some cases, and knock-kneed in others, according to the original strength or make of his frame. This I believe was one of the principal reasons for introducing the use of the loose trousers now worn by the Sepoys, which completely conceals the defect alluded to, besides assimilating the dress of the native to that of the European soldier, which itself was a point of some importance. In other respects I do not think that any great improvement has taken place in the dress, and quite the reverse is

observable in the size and general appearance of the men themselves. Their clothing, however, is better made than formerly, and the substitution of white belts for the black ones, which were in use at the time of which I speak, has been the means of giving them a more soldier-like bearing, notwithstanding their gradual deterioration in strength and stature. In those times it was not uncommon to see a man with a coat, the sleeves of which scarcely reached below his elbows: now the clothing is generally too large instead of too small; but is the fault in the dimensions of the coats, or in those of the men who are intended to wear them? In point of costume, however, the greatest alteration has taken place in the officers. At the period referred to, it was scarcely possible to conceive a more grotesque figure than a Bengal officer. He was about half a century behind his brother of the Royal service—he wore his sash and a black shoulder-belt underneath his coat, whilst the latter was cut away on each side in front as if for the sole purpose of allowing those two essential evidences of his martial profession to shew themselves. Then, in proud defiance of the ravages which a long residence in a tropical climate

had committed on his nether man, he wore tight pantaloons and spatter-dashes, as gaiters were then called. As to hats, or caps, or whatever name they might go by, they were of the most uncouth description, and generally of the most unwieldy size ; so that, judging from the smallness of his limbs, and the magnitude of his top gear, one could hardly divest one's self of the idea, that the first violent gust of wind could completely upset him. But this was not all : the head of this soldier-like figure was powdered all over, and ornamented with a queue of twelve or fourteen inches in length, around the root of which a sort of powdery halo was allowed to display itself on the collar and back of the coat in the shape of a semi-circle, as if to give due notice, that however the huge hat or cap, just described, might conceal the fact, the head of the wearer was covered with the prescribed quantity of powder and pomatum. But even at that period, reform had insinuated itself between the passive obedience of the army at large, and the utter abhorrence of all attempts at innovation which distinguished its senior officers. Whilst the latter, and all the upholders of authority and the regulations, assiduously cherished



their own hair, and loaded it with pomatum in an atmosphere of 90° of Fahrenheit ! the young men insisted upon cropping themselves, and wearing false queues just tinged sufficiently with powder to enable them to conform to the letter of the law ; and it was amusing to see an old martinet walk round one of these incorrigibles on parade, peering under the rim of his hat in order to see whether the powder really extended beyond the false queue upon which it was spread merely by way of decoy to the old gentleman's vigilance. No sooner, however, was the parade dismissed, than the young men threw off all disguise, (for that was really the name which their regimental equipments deserved,) the parade ground became one huge dressing-room ; as soon as the officers fell out, their servants ran forward to assist them in disrobing—away went coat, sash, sword, and belt, cap and pig-tail, and in an instant with a round hat and fashionable jacket the young bucks of that day looked conscious of having thrown off the slough of at least fifty years.

But it was seldom that these little trials of our patience or ingenuity occurred ; generally speaking, our life was one of complete enjoyment.

the commanding officer's breakfast was always a public one, provided we went in the disguise above-mentioned, but even that point was not insisted upon by all ; and for any person beneath his rank to exact the observance of such formality, was quite out of the question. Dinner parties, too, were very frequent among the serious and married officers, though, by the way, there were very few of the latter in those days, and those parties were never considered to be complete unless the young officers were invited. But besides all this, there was a sort of open house kept by certain public-spirited individuals, chiefly staff-officers and those fond of sport ; a red lion, as we used to call it, where all who wished to engage in manly amusement and exercises used to assemble and form a school of instruction, or gymnasium, for the encouragement of every bold and active pursuit that could give stimulus and variety to a soldier's life in cantonments. Riding, leaping, shooting at a mark, throwing the spear, exercising with the broadsword in the English or in the native fashion, racing, hog-hunting, &c., all in turns occupied our attention under the guidance of the liberal individuals who, not contented with

being our bests on these occasions, constituted themselves our instructors, and became our models for imitation. In the bright cluster of names which now crowd upon my memory, I have only room to insert those of Paton, Price, Tod, Mainwaring, and an artillery officer of the name of Brooke, a man who seemed to my mind to want nothing but opportunity to realize the idea we form of such a character as Sir Philip Sidney. With a handsome countenance, and commanding figure, he was brave, ardent, intellectual, and benevolent above his means, possessing a mind capable of any degree of cultivation, and a disposition which, whilst it attracted by its frankness, commanded respect by the invariably good intention it displayed. The individuals I have named, I used to look upon as forming the very quintessence of all that was bold, generous, and manly in the military character—but where are they now? And if most of them are no more, or if those who still survive have put on the garb of time, and assumed a new character with their years, where, let me ask, are their successors? Alas! echo may well answer, where?

The happiness enjoyed by us in Calcutta was

too great to last; the sieges of Sasney and Bijaghur, and the storming of Allighur, had suggested to the Commander-in-Chief the expediency of having a supply of young officers at hand to fill up his broken ranks; I accordingly found myself on board a budgerow bound for Cawnpore, with a fleet of unposted ensigns under the command of an old and steady officer, to whom the somewhat responsible duty was entrusted of keeping us out of harm's-way till we reached our destination.

Another long voyage after having so recently escaped from the confinement of an Indiaman was rather discouraging, and I parted from my late friends with a heavy heart, and with the most dismal forebodings. But in this world almost everything happens contrary to our expectation:—if we expect pleasure, we are surely disappointed; if pain, things invariably turn out better than we had ventured to hope. In both cases, I suppose the mind, by dwelling on its own anticipations, in some measure neutralizes their effect; but I am no philosopher; all I can say is, that this was the case in the instance before us: the voyage up the river, instead of being dull

and monotonous, was one of the most agreeable I have ever made. At every place where we stopped for the evening, we managed to discover something new or interesting to amuse us. At Plassey, I recollect, we reconnoitred Clive's field of battle, criticised his entrenchments, took post at the Nabob's hunting scat, (now, by the way, completely washed into the river,) and, in short, "fought his battle o'er again." At another place, we procured ponies, and dubbing every tame pig we found with the name of wild boar, got up a glorious hog-hunt. Then, of our shooting adventures there was no end—not a day passed but some of our very young hands made some notable discovery in the way of game, for so every strange bird was designated. I will not vouch exactly for their bringing in male vultures as wild turkeys, but mistakes of nearly as ludicrous a description were not uncommon; and great was the entertainment of our servants, occasionally, when ordered to cook some of this nondescript wild-fowl for our dinner. Meantime a fine easterly breeze was wafting us rapidly on our way; we soon quitted the small rivers of the Delta, and found ourselves sailing on the broad and magnificent Ganges.

What a noble stream is the Ganges when it first meets the eye of a man who has seen nothing larger than the Thames or the Severn ! its immense expanse giving it the appearance of an ocean — the distant trees looking more as if they grew on detached islands than on the opposite bank of the river. The stillness of the scene, too, adds to the illusion ; for, notwithstanding the rapid current and muddy tinge of its water, the Ganges flows on so soft and yielding a soil, that it is accompanied by none of that loud hoarse murmuring which characterizes a body of water running over a rocky bed or gravelly bottom. Not, however, that it is entirely destitute of noise along its higher bank, and where the force of the stream has something to contend with, it roars and boils with a fury that threatens to tear away the land in its headlong progress. Then its islands and sand banks occasionally produce the same effect ; but, generally speaking, when near the lower bank, and the wind is lulled, the quietness of all around is very remarkable, so much so, that on landing and proceeding some fifty yards from the margin of the stream, there exists nothing to remind one that so

mighty a river is close at hand. I have spoken of the sand banks ; these occasionally afforded us a good deal of sport, for they are the favourite haunts of alligators, which lie basking upon them for hours during the heat of the day ; sometimes we were enabled to approach so close in our budgerows as to get very fair shots at them, but never apparently did we succeed in wounding them. On being disturbed by the report of our pieces, they gnashed their jaws at us, and lashing their huge tails in a terrific manner, plunged into the stream with a fierceness which at first made us imagine they were going to turn the tables and attack us ; however, no such event ever occurred, though, to say the truth, I should not have relished being in a very small boat in the immediate neighbourhood of such hideous monsters just at that moment. But I must continue my onward progress. Soon the luxuriant, I might say rank vegetation of Bengal was left behind us, the cocoa-nut gave way to the palmyra, and date trees became more frequent, though still holding out a promise of fruit which they never can fulfil, as it is only the female tree that is seen to grow to the east of the Indus ; the fructifying male is no-

where to be found in those wide regions. The face of the country, though still for the most part a dead plain, and a moist and well-watered one, exhibits fewer signs of fertility, and a more scanty population ; the banks of the river are comparatively neglected, and we frequently sailed a considerable distance without discerning a single habitation.

As we advanced, however, the houses became more numerous, and in the towns and villages more substantial, relieved by handsome domes, and detached arcaded turrets, generally of an octagonal form, surmounted by a cupola. These, which are so pleasing a characteristic of Mahommedan architecture in India, almost entirely supersede the more unseemly pinnacles of the Hindoo places of worship. The appearance of the population, too, is greatly changed ; in Bengal the men are sleek, slender, and sometimes of so delicate a form, as almost to resemble females ; whilst at others, they carry with them a something both in form and feature that irresistibly reminds us of an over-grown ape. But, in ascending the Ganges, the human figure is observed to assume its finest proportions, and with the sole exception of the defect in the ap-



pearance of their lower extremities before alluded to, there are, perhaps, few countries in the world which can exhibit finer specimens of men than are to be found in Upper Behar, and in the north-western provinces of the Bengal Presidency, including the Dooab and Oude, and the country extending to the base of the Nepaul hills.

At Cawnpore, my arrears of pay, and the little credit I possessed, were managed with such success that I procured two camels, a tent, and a Toorkey-galloway, besides a stout bullock to carry my crockery; and with some old wine chests speedily and ingeniously metamorphosed into camel and bullock trunks, I soon found myself ready to take the field with a tolerably serviceable equipment. My tent, to be sure, was none of the newest, but I did not stand much upon appearances, and the gentleman who "let me have it," as the phrase is, assured me that, barring accident, it would last as long as the war, at the end of which, my prize money, no doubt, would enable me to indulge my taste without those little drawbacks which that marplot, Economy, is so fond of throwing in the way of our inclinations. Besides, part of the purchase-money

was allowed to stand over for a month or two on my note of hand ; and I, with the bright prospects before me, thought it was no departure from my resolution of not getting into debt, merely to anticipate a small portion of the coming harvest, particularly when nobody else would trust me. “ All that you have to do,” said my friend, “ is to take care that your cattle are strong and healthy, and to avoid loading them to anything like their full strength. The lighter your tent is, therefore, the better ; a soldier, when he halts, never knows how soon he may be again called upon to beat a march—so commend me to the tent that travels best !” This I thought a very sensible argument. I became quite proud of my new habitation, and not a little of the discernment which had enabled me to select it.

Our little detachment arrived at Agra without any incident worth recording. My tent, which I had thought so pleasant in the morning before breakfast, turned out rather warm in the middle of the day ; but as the weather was now beginning to get colder I did not apprehend any inconvenience from this circumstance, besides, I should become more inured to exposure, and then we

almost always encamped close to a mango-tope or grove of trees, under the shade of which we hardly felt the want of any tent at all.

We were, on the upward march, nearly as much our own masters as we had been during our passage up the river, but at Agra, as the officer with whom we travelled informed us, a new world would open upon us. And so we found it in every respect. After a rather dull and unpleasant march from Etinaudpour, chiefly through deep and gloomy ravines, the fortress of Agra, with the city and its ruin-bestrewed environs, burst suddenly upon our view, standing on the opposite bank of the Jumna, in which the red walls of the building, with here and there a white marble edifice and its gilded domes, were beautifully reflected and relieved by the bright azure tint of a cloudless sky. The fort, with its lofty battlements upholding the palace erected by the Emperor Acbar, formed the centre of this magnificent picture. On our right, the city, with its mosques and turrets and pavilions, extended as far as the eye could reach, and to our left, the view was terminated by the Tâje, with its beautiful domes and minarets, which, seen at this distance, whence the eye can embrace the

whole plan and construction of the edifice, appears to greater advantage than probably from any other point of view.

The whole station was in a good deal of bustle and excitement at the moment of our arrival. General Lake, (Commander-in-Chief,) after his brilliant campaign against Scindia—at the conclusion of which the latter was compelled to accept of peace on whatever terms the victors thought proper to dictate—had left an army of about six thousand men to observe the motions of Holkar, the only Mahratta chieftain who had not been engaged; but who now seemed unaccountably bent upon commencing hostilities. This force was to communicate with another which was on its march from Guzerat, and thus for the first time establish a connected chain of operations from Bengal to the Bombay side of India. The General, however, like most of His Majesty's officers of that day, had but an indifferent idea of the degree of military talent to be found in any but the service to which he himself belonged. His first Indian campaign, indeed, ought to have done something to clear his mind on this subject, but it takes a long course of varied experience

thoroughly to root out prejudices which are frequently only the more obstinately adhered to in consequence of the weakness of the foundation on which they depend. Englishmen had not then fought side by side with almost every nation of the civilized world, and gained that lesson which brave and liberal minds so soon acquire under such circumstances, that in war the courage and conduct of a soldier have no more to do with his complexion than with the colour of his coat. The Commander-in-Chief of that time, therefore, thought differently ; and although the force in question was composed entirely of natives, including two battalions which had greatly distinguished themselves in the capture of Rampoora, he deemed it necessary that a king's officer should command them, and accordingly placed the Hon. Colonel Monson, of His Majesty's 76th, at their head ; whilst the authorities at Bombay, with equal wisdom, ordered Colonel Murray, of the same service, to take command of the force which was detached by that Presidency. In no two instances, probably, could a worse selection have been made. The last mentioned officer did quite enough to vindicate the truth of this remark in

other quarters of the globe ; but Monson, I believe, never afterwards left India. He was a very brave man, and had been a good regimental officer. He had distinguished himself on the Madras side of India, by making what was called a dash with his Company at a small fort, where, happening to succeed and to be promptly supported, he saved the army a detention of some days ; and he had, as is well known, commanded the storming party when the gates of Allighur were blown open. But bravery even to rashness was his only qualification ; and as a competent judge has pronounced, the soldier does not require the presence of extraordinary courage in his leader, provided the latter be not actually a coward,—but what he does expect, and what fixes his confidence, is the conviction that his commander is wise and skilful enough to foresee and provide against any accident that may occur. This, however, was precisely what Colonel Monson was unable to do. Holkar, with considerable tact, made head against both the advancing columns in such a manner as to lead each of the commanders to believe that he had the whole of the enemy's force in his front ; and neither of them understanding how to ascer-

tain the real-state of affairs, though they knew they were within a few marches of each other, they both simultaneously turned to the right about, and retreated as fast as their legs could carry them. The Mahratta upon this took the utmost advantage of his good fortune. He merely detached a few horsemen to keep up the panic in Murray's detachment, and turning the rest of his disposable force upon Monson, prepared to carry the war into the British territories in Hindostan. Monson retreated in such breathless haste that he very soon left his artillery behind him, owing, it was said, to the badness of the roads—though no badness of the roads prevented his adversary from bringing up much more cumbrous artillery, (and some even assert the *captured British ordnance*,) to cannonade him whenever he attempted to make a stand. During all this time, however, the troops, though miserably supplied with provisions, deprived of shelter, and compelled to make long night marches in the height of the rainy season, conducted themselves admirably; and whenever a fair opportunity of getting at the enemy was afforded them, nobly supported the character of the Bengal Native Infantry. The 2d battalions

of the 2d, 12th, and 21st regiments, were particularly distinguished; and the passage of the Bannas nullah, as well as the gallant action with the enemy's cavalry at Hindown, if done justice to, would form as brilliant a page in the annals of this arm of the service, as Seetabuldee does in those of their mounted brethren. Two battalions (the 2d of the 9th, and 1st of the 4th Native Infantry) and six guns had been despatched from Agra to assist in extricating the retreating force, but some of the guns were shut up in Rampoorah, and the rest lost; and the 14th, though it behaved very well at the Bannas, afterwards exhibited symptoms of disaffection. To such a state of disorganization, in short, was the whole detachment reduced, that, on reaching Biana, it broke, and officers and men made the best of their way to Agra, in the utmost confusion.

This disaster occasioned no small stir among the troops cantoned on the right bank of the Jumna, especially as the first intelligence of it was accompanied by rumours that the whole Mahratta force under Holkar in person was speedily approaching. The fort of Agra was put into the best possible state of defence, and preparation



made to resist attack. This alarm, however, turned out to be groundless,—Holkar well knew the great advantage of gaining possession of Delhi, and with it of the person of the Mogul Emperor: he accordingly left his cavalry to pursue Monson almost to the gates of Agra, and marched off with his infantry and guns to lay siege to the capital of Hindostan. But when once a panic has occurred it is not easily dissipated, and Colonel G. S. Brown, who commanded in Muttra, apprehensive of being overwhelmed, took occasion, on the appearance of a few horsemen, to abandon that town and retreat into Agra almost with as much precipitation as Colonel Monson.

All this occurred just before my arrival, and I could not help congratulating myself upon having marched from Cawnpore instead of accepting the option of performing the journey by travelling night and day in a palanquin, or *going dāk*, as it is called. Camp equipage, horses and cattle of all kinds, sold at an enormous price, and officers who had lost everything in the late calamity were compelled to incur a heavy load of debt in order to refit themselves. A subaltern, indeed, received something more than six hundred rupees for the

loss of his baggage; but the enhanced value of every article rendered that sum but a small compensation, and it was not till two or three years after that a further donation of three months' additional field allowance was made to them.

## MAHOMMEDAN ARCHITECTURE.

But these arrangements did not affect me, and as soon as the excitement of the moment was over, I had leisure to look about for some of those memorials of past magnificence which Agra possesses in such abundance. I first directed my steps to the palace in the fort, erected by the great Acbar, and which afterwards became the prison of his grandson, Shah Jehan, whom, by the way, it is the fashion to pity very much because he was deposed and confined by his son, the crafty Aurungzebe, forgetting that he himself, after having caused the assassination of his brother, had shewn the example by rebelling against his own father, and doing his utmost to depose, if not to murder him. The palace, I think, hardly deserves its high reputation, though perhaps some allowance should be made for an edifice that was planned and

built so long ago as the year 1564. But the Mussulmans, in India at least, are more remarkable for their sepulchral and religious monuments than for their other buildings : the former are for the most part grand and imposing in their appearance, and have a solemnity corresponding with the purposes of their erection ; their plan, however, is so simple and uniform, that those requisites are easy of attainment in any climate ; but in their palaces and dwelling-houses the case is very different. To exclude the heated air, and to guard against intrusion, are objects of the first importance, and how to appropriate the necessary space for health and recreation, under these circumstances, must always be a matter of no small difficulty. It is owing to the constraint which is thus imposed upon the genius of the architect, aided, perhaps, by a want of science in the construction of any other than vaulted roofs, that the apartments of their grandest mansions are small or narrow in proportion to their length, their staircases steep and badly made, and even their retired courts and gardens of very paltry dimensions. Yet, such is the propensity of the human mind to magnify every concealed object, that travellers who have

only been permitted to view the interior of their edifices through a window or a wicket, have never failed to launch into the greatest extravagances in describing their stupendous extent and magnificent decorations. In regard to the latter, however, they were probably nearer the truth—the precious metals, the most costly embroidery, and the richest silks and brocades, were employed in the greatest profusion ; the finest marbles, or even more valuable stones, were also made use of ; and in finish and delicacy of workmanship the artisans of this country, it is well known, can compete with any other in the world.

One of the principal objects of curiosity, next to the part of the palace in which Shah Jehan was confined, is the Hall of Audience in the large square, where a wild attempt was made upon his life by Amer Sing, the eldest son of the Jeypour Rajah, but who had been set aside in order to make room for the elevation of a younger brother. A deep cut was shewn us on ~~one~~ of the pillars as having been made by the sword of an attendant Omrah in the struggle that ensued when the young Rajpoot prince rushed with his drawn dagger upon the sovereign ; and the nearest entrance of the fort, still called Amer

Sing's gateway, was said to have been closed and built up in consequence of its having been deemed polluted when the bodies of those who fell in the massacre of the Rajpoot's guard and retinue were drawn through it. This gate, however, has since been repaired, and opened, in order to form a more direct communication with the cantonments outside the fort.

Whilst engaged in the examination we noticed some grated openings at the back of the Hall of Audience, behind the place where the throne was said to have stood, and exploring our way through a small door in that direction, we gained the entrance of a range of dark and dismal apartments, lighted and ventilated only by the gratings which had attracted our attention, but communicating by means of a long winding passage with the interior of the palace. These, no doubt, we thought had been the state prisons; and in confirmation of the idea, I recollected to have read somewhere of the refinement of cruelty with which the Mogul emperors were accustomed to treat their personal enemies by locking them up in narrow cells in the vicinity, and even within the sound of the pomp, splendour, and gaiety of the court, in order to make them the

more poignantly feel their own hapless misery. I was ruminating on this melancholy picture, when my companion, who was almost as great an enthusiast as myself, discovered that in the profusion of loose earth and dust with which the floor was strewed, some bones were intermixed, and taking up one of them, it appeared to us to be part of the skeleton of a human being! Here, thought we, are the remains of an unhappy creature who most probably pined away his existence in this dreadful prison, perhaps under the lingering torments of hunger! On inspecting the relic a little more closely, however, what was our horror at finding, although it was a good deal decayed, that it bore distinct traces of circular perforations that had apparently cut it through and through! "Alas, a quicker death than that of starvation must have put an end to this wretched inmate of the dungeon!" was the first thought that occurred to us; and we busied ourselves with imagining the instrument of torture by which such shocking barbarity could have been inflicted, and that not only once, but several times, for such the evidence which we held in our hand authorized us to conclude. We searched the walls of the gloomy tenement for any

indication of rings, and bolts, and staples, but none were to be found ; however, the helpless sufferer, we thought, might easily have been thrown upon his face and held down whilst his tormentors bored his back and shoulders in the manner supposed. The fact, though shocking to think of, was too evident to admit of doubt. In my small retinue of servants at this period, I kept a *hookah burdar*, a man whom, as he was a tall handsome figure, with a lighter complexion than his countrymen in general, and, moreover, spoke Hindostanee with that guttural accent which natives of the upper provinces so much affect, I had always set down in my mind, not exactly for a prince in disguise, but for one descended from a family which had been much superior to its present condition. On this account, and to improve myself in the language, I was accustomed to converse a good deal with him ; and in discussing the comparative merits of his countrymen and my own, as the dominant caste of India, it may well be conceived that, the lion not being the painter, the portrait of the former was anything but a flattering likeness. He was hard to convince, however, and I, piqued at his obstinacy, seldom lost an opportunity of

bringing fresh instances in support of my side of the argument. He usually attended me in my little excursions, and his presence at this moment furnished me with an irresistible temptation for making a home-thrust upon him, so, taking the relic in my hand, I turned to him, and with an air of triumph, asked him sarcastically if he knew what that was? "Oh, yes," he immediately replied, "perfectly well; it is the shoulder-blade of a goat: these rooms were occupied by General Perron 'as workshops for the button-makers of his Sepoys' regimentals." In an instant the whole truth flashed upon us; my companion burst into a roar of laughter, and I, joining him more to hide my confusion than from any inclination to be merry;—we rushed out of the filthy place, which, now that the illusion was gone, had an insupportably offensive odour, and I secretly made a resolution never again to speculate upon fossil remains till I had first made some progress in the study of comparative anatomy.

There are many points well worthy of attention in and about the town, but I had no opportunity of examining them, particularly a Christian religious institution, which was said to date as far back



as the reign of Acbar. To that emperor, it is well known, and to his son and grandson, Agra is indebted for its rank as a capital, and for its principal embellishments such as they exist at this day. Of the three monarchs alluded to, however, perhaps the second, Jehangire, although eclipsed in splendour and abilities both by his father and his son, is an object of greater interest to Englishmen than either of the others, in consequence of his family having been the first of the House of Timur, with whom they communicated. Sir Thomas Rowe, the English ambassador, had an interview with him at Ajmere, where he also saw Prince Churruum, afterwards Shah Jehan, who seems to have entertained an almost prophetic dislike of Christians, as if foreseeing that his family was destined ere long to fall into hopeless obscurity by their instrumentality, in the person of Sultan Mauzin's great-grandson. In Acbar's day, Christianity certainly missed a good opportunity of establishing itself in India: the mind of the emperor was so unsettled, that if good argument had been urged upon him, there would have been little doubt of the result. But at that time, unfortunately, the Portuguese were the only Christians known

in Hindostan, and they being Roman Catholics, their form of worship was not calculated to strike the mind of a Mahometan as an improvement. Shan Jehan, and his amiable sultana, (daughter of Aziph Jah, a rigid Mussulman of the Shea sect,) saw a good deal of them in the Deccan and on the western coast of India, and seems to have looked upon them in no other light than as idolaters. If the English embassy had occurred in the time of Acbar, when the Reformation had already taken full effect in Great Britain, probably the consequences might have been different. But Selim, the son of Acbar, who took the name of Jehangire on ascending the throne, was too full of the vanity of his own abilities to listen with candour to the arguments of others, especially as in his mind the religious ceremonies of the English and the Portuguese were confounded together under the general name of Christianity. He himself was said to be of no religion; he is even reported to have escaped the usual initiatory ceremony necessary to qualify him as a Mussulman, though the fact is hardly consistent with probability, when we recollect that he was born under the roof of Selim Shah Chisti, a reputed Mahom-

medan saint, after whom he was named, and whose anxiety that Acbar should not die without leaving an heir to the empire is sufficiently notorious. He, however, wanting the abilities of his predecessor, did not, like him, enter into the discussion in the spirit of a philosopher inquiring after truth, but rather in that of a despotic ruler who imagined that his authority was sufficient to sanction any scheme he might choose to adopt. This idea, indeed, even Acbar did not entirely discard; but having too much sense to act upon it, he contented himself with tolerating religious opinions of every description, but his son Jehangire, and his grandson Shah Jehan, both were infected with the mania, not uncommon among eastern potentates, of becoming the founders of a new religion, and rather than adopt that which Christianity inculcates, they would have taken refuge in a system of pure Deism, with such modifications, however, as their individual characters might have suggested.

## CHAPTER III.

THE TAJE MAHAL—ITS FORM, DECORATIONS, ECHOES—  
MOONLIGHT VIEW.

BUT to return to Agra: The din of war is already sounding in my ears, and I can scarcely afford a moment to take a rapid glance at the Tâje, that magnificent and interesting monument of Shah Jehan's affection for his consort, Argemund Banu, surnamed Mumtaza Zemani, the daughter, as above remarked, of Aziph Jah, the niece of the beautiful and talented Noor Jehan, and granddaughter of the excellent Chaja Aiass, better known as vizier by the name of Etimâd Dowlah. The Tâje has been so often described that at this time of day it is needless for me to give a minute account of it. Its general form, as I have already hinted, is seen to the greatest advantage from a considerable distance; on approaching it more nearly one is sensible of a fault in its perspective; when the eye is directed to the upper part of it

from any position within the garden, the dome gives the building the appearance of increasing in size where it ought to be diminished by the effect of distance, like the trees in Hogarth's frontispiece to "Kerby." This is occasioned by the dome itself being too large a segment of a sphere, and by its diameter being consequently too great when compared with the diameter of the neck on which it is elevated above the upper terrace, also by the neck being too long to be concealed as much as it should have been by the projecting parts of the substruction, when viewed at the angle at which the whole edifice bursts upon the spectator on entering the garden, which I conceive ought to have been the main point of view in the contemplation of the architect. But this, I am aware, will by many be considered as hypercriticism ; and I am ready enough to allow that it is to the exquisite finish of all its parts, rather than to any superiority in its architectural construction, that the Tâje owes its well-merited fame. Nothing indeed can well exceed the elegance of the design, or the delicacy of execution, which the interior ornaments display. Some of the flowers adorning the tombs of Shah Jehan and his sultana, for they

were buried side by side, and the other fancy work on the screens and surrounding walls, contain nearly one hundred stones, many of them extremely hard and difficult to be cut, yet all fitted exactly to the forms, and even to the graduated shades which they were intended to represent, and so beautifully polished that they have the appearance of fine paintings on the surface of the white marble, in which they are embedded. Agates, blood-stone, cornelians, jasper, lapis lazuli, several rare and beautiful descriptions of marble, and a stone of a deep yellow colour, which the natives call sengtilac, having the appearance of burnished gold, are the materials of which these ornaments are composed ; and the skill with which their different hues are combined, so as to give the natural representation of flowers and leaves, in every variety of tint and position, is such as to excite our astonishment and admiration, and to render us perfectly indifferent to the mere architectural character of this splendid mausoleum.

The lower part of the structure is occupied by a vault, in which are to be seen the sarcophagi, or tombs, properly so called, those above merely indicating the spot beneath which (whatever be

the number of intervening floors) the bodies of the emperor and his consort repose. This chamber, though adorned in the same elaborate style as the upper apartments, is generally less admired in consequence of the light being too much excluded to admit of its ornaments being duly appreciated, or perhaps a feeling of satiety indisposes all but the most indefatigable to examine them after having closely inspected the others under more favourable circumstances. To my mind, however, there is something much more attractive in the chastened light, or rather the solemn gloom, of this than in the dazzling glare and almost obtrusive grandeur of the upper story. But this is not the only point of attraction which the vaulted chamber possesses ; it has an echo, which is greatly admired for its very mellow and distinct reverberation of musical sound particularly, giving to a flute, for example, the rich and powerful tone of the finest oboe. But, to my perception, this echo is much inferior to one which I met with on my way up the Ganges, at Bankipore, near Patna, in a building called the *Gola*, erected by the late General Garstin, I believe, as a granary, in the event of an apprehended famine. The structure has some-

what the form of a bee-hive, and the interior surface is consequently circular in its horizontal, and approaching the elliptical or parabolic in its vertical section, a form which I fancy is considered as the most favourable for the production of a perfect echo ; and this is certainly the finest I ever heard. Sounds are reflected by it with such precision, beauty, and increased volume, that the simple notes of the chord major given in slow succession on the flute, have the complete effect of a fine toned organ, the arpeggio being repeated in the grandest style, deep, majestic, and solemn, at first slowly, and then with gradually increasing quickness, but more feeble and apparently more distant at every successive reverberation,

“Till by degrees remote and small,  
The strains decay  
And melt away  
In a dying, dying fall.”

In short, the analogy between the effects of echo and those of the mirror—between reflection of light and reverberation of sound, was never more clearly exhibited. The number of repetitions I will not, at this distance of time, venture even to conjecture ; but some idea on the subject may be formed from the fact that two individuals, one



clapping his hands, and the other knocking with the end of his stick upon the floor, in an instant produced the effect of a large and crowded audience thundering its applause upon some favourite actor ; and if at the same time one shouted whilst the other hissed, a more lively idea could not be given—at least as far as the sense of hearing was concerned—of an O. P. row of the most formidable description. It is much to be wished, for the sake of the very interesting but imperfect branch of science which I think has been called “*the catoptrics of sound*,” that competent persons would make some experiments in the building referred to, and lay the result before the public. If the position of the experimentalist were carefully varied in a vertical as well as horizontal direction, and if care were taken in marking the effect of opening and shutting the aperture at the top of the building, in advertence to the modification of sound produced on the human voice by making the same experiment with respect to the nostrils, I have no doubt that the result would be highly curious and satisfactory in clearing up whatever uncertainty still remains as to the true theory of repeated sounds.

But I must hasten to quit this enchanting scene. After spending the day with some officers quartered in the Tâje gardens, I took my leave of the spot to prepare for my march towards Muttra, but on my way back I was tempted to take a last view of the building, and for this purpose I scrambled up a height by the road-side on which the palace of the great Byram Khan was said to have stood. The moon, only a few days past the full, had risen so high that just as I attained a sight of the mausoleum, she appeared exactly on the point of the eastern minaret. The effect, though momentary, was singularly brilliant, and yet so appropriate, that in an instant the minarets at the angles of the noble terrace on which the Tâje is elevated assumed in my imagination the appearance of gigantic tapers placed there to illuminate the shrine ; and, for a moment, I expected to see the other three lighted up in the same manner by the attendant fakirs. But even while this passed in my mind, the illusion was dissipated, almost as quickly as it was formed, by the moon quitting her apparent position, and leaving the minaret in comparative obscurity. Still, however, the effect of her chaste and silvery

light on the mass of white marble exposed to her rays was magnificent in the extreme—it gave to the entire edifice a bright yet subdued lustre, admirably in keeping with its character—the grey azure tint of a cloudless sky added to the beauty of the scene—whilst the sharp and distinctly pencilled shades of the turrets and dark sides of the building, broken here and there by the brilliant effect of the light as it caught a pinnacle or projecting angle, gave contrast and variety to the whole, and completed one of the most beautiful moonlight views I ever recollected to have seen.

## CHAPTER IV.

SECUNDRA—THE FIRST MAHRATTA WAR—HOLKAR—LORD LAKE,  
THE COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF—THE BRITISH CAMP—THE MARCH—  
THE ATTACK ON THE BAGGAGE—MUTTRA—VICINITY OF THE  
ENEMY.

It was towards the end of the month of September that the Commander-in-Chief arrived at Agra; the cold season had already begun to set in, and it was with a feeling of delight that we received an order to join the camp then forming in the neighbourhood of Secundra. The troops were divided into four brigades of infantry and two of cavalry; the remaining part of Colonel Monson's detachment, reinforced by some flank companies of Europeans, being styled the reserve.

At Secundra I first heard the sound of a gun pointed towards the enemy; not, however, that we were engaged, or likely to be so, at that place, but in those days every regiment and battalion in the service had two six-pounders attached to it,

and no sooner were we beyond what might be considered our own frontier, than every horseman who made his appearance in front of any part of our line was sure of being taken for a Mahratta. But Holkar had a much deeper game to play than that of provoking us to battle in a position chosen by ourselves. When he directed his main body upon Delhi, he employed every means of persuasion in his power to induce Scindia and the Rajah of Berar to join him in an attack upon the English, and the plan of operations which he was understood to have proposed to them was highly creditable to his military genius. Calculating upon being able to compel Delhi to surrender before our army could have time to relieve it, he was to cross the Jumna with all his cavalry, and lay waste the Dooab as he traversed it on his way to Rohilcund, where he expected to be joined by a large force, as the whole population were ripe for revolt. He was then to burst into Oude, and after ravaging the open country, and taking possession of Lucknow and the other large towns in his route, to advance and plunder Benares. Meantime Scindia, joining his infantry and guns to those of Holkar, after the latter had left a strong garrison

in Delhi, was to detach a sufficient force to besiege or blockade Agra, and with the remainder of the army to cross into the Dooab, attacking Allahabad, and after forming a junction with the chiefs of Bundelcund, advancing upon Mirzapore with a view of ultimately co-operating with Holkar as circumstances might render advisable. And, lastly, the Berar Rajah was to follow up the pursuit of Colonel Murray's detachment, to protect the line of the Nerbudda, and by amusing our troops in the Deccan as well as he was able, prevent them from moving in the direction of Hindostan. But although Scindia knew that he stood committed with our Government by the conduct of some of his Sirdars during the recent retreat, and although he knew that the Rajpoots, to a man, were ready to take part in a war against us, yet such was his jealousy of the ascendancy which Holkar had acquired by his victory at Poonah, that he threw away this, perhaps, only opportunity that was ever to be offered him of aiming a decisive blow at the power of the East India Company. In justice to him, however, and to the line of policy which he adopted, I must not neglect to remark, that the position which

the Mahrattas now occupied in the affairs of Hindostan was vastly different from what it had been at the decline of the Mogul Empire. De Boigne, Perron, and others, had given an European organization to their infantry, and by improving and adding to their artillery, had rendered them extremely formidable, if not altogether irresistible to other native powers not so far advanced as themselves in those important branches of the art military. But, situated as the Mahrattas were, this was beginning at the wrong end. Without any settled form of government, or public institutions of any kind, they were thus led to adopt, for purposes of aggression, the same system of warfare which the civilized world had adopted, mainly as a defence for all that was valuable in the most improved condition of society. In training the bulk of their army after the European manner, they were necessarily compelled to diminish the strength and lower the military pride of that cavalry to which they had heretofore been indebted for their success in war. Nor was this all ; their infantry and guns, as the slowest moving body, regulated the movements of their whole force ; and as it was quite impossible

for those arms suddenly to attain the qualifications required to place them on an equality, as to general efficiency, with the infantry and artillery of an European state, they were never able to vie with the Company's troops either in marching or manœuvring, and were consequently compelled to accept of battle whenever it suited their adversary's purpose ; whilst their cavalry, hampered in its movements by the cumbrous body to which it was attached, possessed no discipline to compensate for this advantage, and was too much weakened in point of numbers to act with decisive effect on an independent body. Examples in elucidation of these remarks were not wanting in the course of the war referred to, but I forget that I am not writing a history of its campaigns, but only of the "*quorum pars parva fui* !" — my own personal adventures in them.

The first appearance of a large encampment where everything is ready for action, yet no hurry, no bustle, no agitation of any sort beyond that ardent zeal which is felt by all ranks, confident in their strength and discipline, and desiring nothing but to be led against the enemy, where every fresh accession to the force joins it in



a state of complete equipment, and where, notwithstanding the complicated nature of the details, the most perfect order is preserved, and yet such attention paid to comfort and convenience, that every individual possesses a home as exclusively his own, as if it were a mansion of the most durable materials, instead of being a mere tenement of cotton cloth or canvass ; all this, with fair weather, and a pleasant climate, accompanied too by the pomp and splendour attending the frequent inspection of newly arrived corps, constitutes so captivating a picture of a soldier's life, that cold indeed must be the man who, when he for the first time finds himself engaged in such a scene, does not feel proud of a profession which is calculated to call forth so many of his energies, and which affords so noble a prospect of continued and dazzling excitement. For my own part I was in a delirium of enjoyment. Every day presented something new,—now an excursion to some place in the neighbourhood, such as to the tomb of the great Acbar, which, hastening to decay in sad and solitary grandeur, I had the heresy *almost* to prefer to the Tâje itself,—now a gallop to meet some new troops coming to make part of the

grand army, corps from various parts of Hindostan, some that had never seen any service at all, others that had formerly been engaged in the wars of the Carnatic or Mysore, and the old soldiers of which affected to believe that no fighting we were likely to see could bear any sort of comparison with the enterprises in which they had borne so distinguished a part. Then there came stray volunteers who had returned from Ceylon, or Egypt, and who, the latter especially, assumed an immense importance on account of their sea-voyage, and the triumphs they were prepared to achieve if the enemy had only thought proper to wait their arrival! On these occasions, however, it was pleasing to observe the cordiality existing between the Europeans and natives, officers as well as privates. I happened to be present at the meeting between an officer of artillery, lately returned from foreign service, and a Jemadar of the 8th, who had formerly been what was termed Native-Adjutant to the Golundauz; they greeted each other with all the frankness and good humour of old soldiers, meeting upon terms of perfect equality, heartily shaking hands, and inquiring with marks of the greatest

interest for mutual friends long since separated from them by the course of the service.

I remained eight or ten days encamped at Secundra, fully engaged in the enjoyment of all the novelties that were daily occurring, and yet panting with such impatience for action that I longed for nothing more than the order for us to commence our march. At length, on the 1st of October, my ears were first saluted by the "general and assembly,"—the great city of pavilions, which I had almost begun to think a new capital of Upper India, was dissolved as by a charm, and its immense population issued forth with all the worldly goods it possessed, as if emigrating to a strange country in search of a new settlement. There were long lines of elephants, camels, horses, and bullocks, droves of oxen, sheep, and goats, carts and native carriages of all sorts, laden till their very axle-trees groaned under the burden, bazars containing artisans of almost every description, tradesmen and even merchants, banghy bearers with their heavy baskets carried at each end of a bamboo and slung over the shoulder, coolies with their load upon their head, palanquins, doolies, in short,

every vehicle or mode of conveyance which India can boast. To protect this moving mass, which covered an immense extent of ground, the army marched in one column, at a convenient distance from the right bank of the Jumna, the advanced and rear-guards being so arranged that they could extend themselves to the right, so as to connect the column with the river, and yet have room for a body of so loose and heterogeneous a description to "go its progress" in the enclosed space.

The first day's march passed, I think, without any extraordinary occurrence, but we advanced very slowly ; and before we came to our ground, I began to see a slight difference between a scamper of nine miles in search of the picturesque, and riding the same distance at a foot-pace over ground, which, loosened as it soon became by the trampling of such a multitude, showered clouds of dust upon us at every breath of wind. The sun, too, though at that season the morning air was particularly cold and bracing, acquired under these circumstances a much greater heat than I was prepared to expect ; and fatigue and an empty stomach were not well calculated to divert my mind from the annoyance it occasioned.

Our second day's march, however, was somewhat more stirring; the enemy's horse appeared in considerable numbers, and the galloper guns of the cavalry kept up a prodigious clattering against them; a general engagement, I thought, was surely about to take place—and, in point of fact, the army did halt more than once in order to form line; but as often as we shewed anything like a good front, the enemy dispersed again, and left us to pursue our march. On one of these occasions an accident occurred that gave me the first sight of a wounded man—a matter of no mean interest to a young soldier: the horse of one of the dragoons, attracted by the neighing of the opposite side, and not exactly entering into our political notions, resolved upon paying his Deccanee friends a visit; taking, therefore, the bit between his teeth, he set off at full speed to join them, and carried his bewildered rider into the midst of the enemy. But, luckily, the latter were in so great a hurry to have the honour of slaying the poor man, that in the confusion the point of a spear entered his charger's flank, who, not admiring this sort of reception, went to the left-about very adroitly, and started back as fast as, or faster than, he had gone,

pursued by some half-dozen of Mahrattas, who only succeeded, however, in slightly wounding the rider in two or three places. The poor fellow looked more frightened than hurt, and we all said something to cheer him, and shew our own bold spirit as we passed ; but I did not neglect availing myself of the first opportunity of tightening my curb-chain, lest my honest Toorkey, who however was no charger, should feel inclined to pay me the same sort of trick.

But shortly after this matters assumed a more serious aspect. On passing some small towns that lay in our route a large interval occurred in our column of march, and the enemy, ever on the alert to discover a weak point, made a dash through it, and rode in amongst the baggage and camp followers. The uproar which this occasioned is more easy to be conceived than described ; it was indeed confusion worse confounded. Those who were mounted hurried away with shouts of alarm towards the front ; those who were on foot threw down their burdens, and falling on their knees implored for mercy—nothing did they anticipate but indiscriminate slaughter ; but, fortunately, the intruders were bent on plunder alone,

and few, if any, of the poor wretches were sacrificed. The Mahrattas, indeed, were rather anxious to preserve them, to make use of them in carrying away the booty ; for as the break in our column was fast closing up, no time was to be lost. Some few camels, however, and a loaded cart or two, were all they could take away, as far as I could observe, and I was not far from the spot ; and yet I must have been mistaken, for on our arrival in camp, not till the sun was past the meridian, five thousand bullocks, belonging to the army contractors, were reported to have thrown their loads, much, I suppose, as all the boats, when a storm occurs in the lower provinces, or all the golahs, in an inundation, are discovered to have been filled with salt. The Mahratta folks, therefore, if they succeeded in ruining some poor devils, more than compensated for that, by helping to make the fortune of the grain agents. This day's march furnished me with ample scope for criticism and reflection ; and there are few young officers who, situated as I was, refrain, I imagine, from making the same use of their newly awakened senses. If the enemy only knew what advantages they possess, what immense use, thought I, might they not

make of them ! A few marches of this harassing description would do more to ruin an army in an Indian climate than an unsuccessful engagement ; and in the pride of my heart I almost wished myself a Mahratta chieftain at the head of twenty thousand horse, that I might shew what sort of game I would play. Military foplings, I continued, believe fighting to constitute all the merits of the profession, and to comprise everything in it that calls for the exertion of fortitude ;—no such thing ! What puts the courage, the health, the constancy of a soldier to the severest trial, is the long endurance of privation, fatigue, and exposure—sleepless nights succeeded by long toilsome marches, without a single ray of glory to relieve or light up his cheerless prospect. No ;—battle is at once the brightest object of his hopes, and the noblest reward of his exertions.

In three days, marching early and encamping late, we reached Muttra, where, for want of supplies, we were detained more than a week, during the greater part of which period the enemy were in the daily practice of insulting us in our very lines, and even killing the sentries at their posts. All this made the General exceedingly wroth, and



believing that their audacity proceeded from confidence in their numbers, he made an attempt to surprise them in their camp, which the scouts assured him was only a mile or two in his front. We accordingly marched before daylight, as we thought in great secrecy, but when the dawn appeared our friends were discovered quite ready to receive us, yet by no means anxious to come to an engagement; we had therefore nothing to do but to march back again. A day or two after, however, we made another attempt, with a little, a very little, more success. The cavalry were instructed to make a circuit to the right, and were to have attacked in flank, whilst we occupied the attention of the enemy in front. But, as before, full information of our movements appeared to have preceded us,—they were all mounted; but the fine array of cavalry that was coming down upon their flank, composed as it was of nearly all the corps, European and Native, in Bengal, certainly caused them no small uneasiness, for they drew off in more confusion than usual—so much so, indeed, that the horse artillery had time to send a few howitzer-shells amongst them, by which we heard that some twenty or thirty were killed or wounded.

On the way back, too, their eagerness to follow us up and insult us with their hootings, induced the General to form an ambush for them, which was managed so adroitly that a few were killed, and some, I believe, taken prisoners. Upon the whole, one good effect was produced by these operations: the enemy were much less troublesome during the remainder of our stay, and even during the march to Delhi, they made only two serious attempts to annoy us, one by cutting in amongst the baggage as they had done at Fuarah; but in this they were foiled with the loss of some of their men, and a few very fine looking horses; and another near Furreedabad, on our near approach to the capital, when they attacked the rear-guard, and though roughly handled by our musketry, succeeded in killing and wounding between twenty and thirty of our men.

#### LORD LAKE AT DELHI.

When the grand army reached Delhi the siege had been raised four days, and none of the enemy's troops were to be seen in the vicinity, excepting a few horse, which we concluded to be the same

that had hung upon our march from Muttra. Our intelligence department, it must be confessed, was not in any very great state of efficiency, but, nevertheless, the Commander-in-Chief had been aware that Holkar had relinquished his attack upon the capital; and on our passing Pulwall, which commands a defile through the Mewaty Hills, it was debated at head-quarters whether it would not be advisable for the army to take that route in order to intercept the retreat of the enemy through the Macherry Rajah's country. On this occasion the report was that the gates of Pulwall were to be blown open by a twelve-pounder, and the corps to which I belonged, being at that moment just abreast of the place, was to form the covering party. An enterprise of this kind is not altogether the pleasantest in which a young soldier can be ordered as his first taste of actual service, for the more experienced officers, knowing the ticklish nature of the affair, depending as it does entirely on the success of the artillery, whilst the infantry, themselves completely uncovered, have nothing but the heads of the enemy, now and then popping above the wall, as a mark for them to fire at, usually contemplate the projected

exploit without any appearance of that spirit-stirring confidence of success which is so well calculated to work upon the mind of a mere novice. As it happened, however, neither my active nor my passive courage was destined to be put to the test. The General resolved upon pursuing his way right toward the mark, heedless of any pranks which the enemy might play off to divert his attention ; and accordingly the march, which had been suspended during the deliberation adverted to, was ordered to be resumed. But the oracles of the army did not neglect this opportunity of severely criticising their leader's conduct ; and I believe it was in the evening of that day that the conversation of some of the young staff-officers, and the civil servants attached to the diplomatic branch of the head-quarter establishment, attracting the General's attention at dinner, he singled out one of the latter, and somewhat acrimoniously asking him if he too wanted to give himself the airs of a General, desired him to mind his own business, and to stick to the pen, for that was *his* weapon. This little ebullition of peevishness was very annoying to the individual at whom it was directed, and the more so, perhaps, as it

was impossible to make any retort at the moment ; but as the most effectual means of wiping away the unmerited slur which it implied, the young man, on a subsequent occasion, solicited permission to accompany the troops on the assault of the "imminent and deadly breach,"—a permission which the veteran commander readily accorded, probably from a consciousness that the rudeness of his sarcasm needed some such reparation. Whether the old or the young head was the wiser on this occasion I will not attempt to determine, but, fortunately for the reputation of the one and the safety of the other, the peril was incurred without any evil consequences, and the volunteer was reserved for better things, and perhaps for worse, than joining a storming party.

But to return to my tale :—The event most completely vindicated the sagacity of our commander. Holkar had merely directed his infantry and guns to retire towards the Alvar territory, in the hope of drawing our whole force in that direction, where his people would have had the advantage of good defensive positions, and ours the disadvantage of a hostile population, deficient supply of forage, &c. But this was not all ; true to his original plan of

carrying the war into the Company's territories, he only waited to see us fall into the snare before he crossed the Jumna in person, and led his cavalry to ravage the plains of the Dooab. Frustrated in this part of his scheme, however, he still remained in the neighbourhood of Delhi; and we may imagine it was with no small joy he saw the army, even so late as the 19th, prepare to set out in pursuit of his main body. But fortunately for our territories, the Commander-in-Chief's good genius, in the shape of an inefficient commissariat, interfered, and we were forced again to halt for several days for a supply of provisions. Still the wary Mahratta watched us most narrowly, and for once in his life must have been heartily sorry that our victualling department was not in better order. Towards the end of October, several days after our arrival at Delhi, his patience was exhausted, and impetuously dashing across the river, after stealing two or three marches upon his adversary, he proceeded, at all hazards, to carry ruin and devastation into the nearest provinces of the Company. On the 31st, General Lake, at the head of the greatest part of his cavalry and the reserve, set out in pursuit, and left the rest of the

army, under the command of General Fraser, in its encampment under the walls of Delhi. It was my fate to be attached to the division with General Fraser, and to endure a long period of inaction.

THE MAUSOLEUM OF HOMAIOON—PREDESTINATION—  
CONVERSION.

During this long halt I employed myself, as I had done at Agra, in searching out whatever was curious or interesting among the numerous monuments, old and new, by which we were surrounded. One of my first excursions was to the mausoleum of the Emperor Homaioon, rendered an object of attraction not more by its imposing size and architecture, than by its having become the almost common receptacle of the mortal remains of all his descendants, from Murad, the Emperor Acbar's second son, to the unfortunate but singularly incapable Dara Shekoo. From the broad and elevated terrace on which the building stands, a fine view is commanded of the windings of the Jumna, and of the level country on the opposite side, extending beyond the fort of Loney, which was taken and sacked by Timur the day before he

crossed the river to attack the city, from nearly the spot which we now occupied. A young Syud, who was apparently in attendance upon the shrine, pointed out to us the site of the battle of Putpur Gunge, (more appropriately styled by us the battle of Delhi,) which delivered the capital of the Mogul empire into the hands of the East India Company. This change of masters appeared to be anything but unpleasing to the feelings of our conductor, for he lost no opportunity of making some remarks upon the ignorance and rapacity of the Mahrattas whom we had just chased away, he hoped for ever. Pointing out some deep marks on the interior of the dome, "They," said he, "were made by the matchlock balls of those dogs of covetousness when firing at the golden chains by which the lamps over the tomb were suspended." It was impossible not to be struck with the remarkable instance of the uncertainty of human grandeur and prosperity which the spectacle of this vast but neglected mausoleum exhibited. The last abode of the son of the enterprising Baber, under whose immediate posterity the empire of the Moguls had attained to so high a pitch of glory, was first profaned by obscure tribes of Hindoos, and afterwards, by the



chance of war, placed under the protection of a race the very existence of whom Baber himself, and perhaps Homaioon, were entirely ignorant, and whom, more than half a century later, the Prince Churrun (Shah Jehan) described as barbarous and contemptible money-getting idolaters. But the mind of a young Englishman, and he too a soldier, is not much given to philosophical or political speculation as to cause and effect ; to me, all I saw appeared to be so naturally the result of the invincible prowess of our troops that I felt no inclination, at that moment, to seek for any other cause. This self-complacency must, I suppose, have evinced itself in my demeanour, for one of the Syuds, several of whom had now collected around me, observed with a sorrowful exclamation, " What was written has come to pass ; but if deeds of glory and worldly splendour can preserve from oblivion, where is there to be found a race that can challenge greater renown than the House of Timur, from Sultan Baber to Bahauder Shah ?" Then pausing as if to await my reply, he continued, " Look at the mighty enterprise, so boldly achieved by Sultan Baber ; the courage and constancy of his magnanimous successor, al-

ways having great treachery to punish, and yet always forgiving his bitterest foes. Then, what think you of the fearless and romantic energy of the wisdom of the great Acbar ; of the power and magnificence of Jehangire ; the courage and splendour and inflexible justice of Shah Jehan ; the profound ability and unequalled power of Aurungzebe ? Look, too, at the great men, the creatures of their choice, whose actions illustrated the brilliant times I speak of. The able, but restless and misguided Byram Khan, and the Mirza, his son, equal, and in some respects superior, to the father ; the venerable and excellent Chajah Aias, father of Noor Jehan, whose name alone recalls everything that is resplendent in beauty or pre-eminent in talent, holding as she did, by the power of both, not only the Emperor himself, but his ablest and most influential ministers and generals under her control ; then, her brother, Asiph Jah, who lived to see his grandson and granddaughter married and seated on the throne of Delhi. Observe, sir," he continued, seeing that I was attentively listening to him,—“ observe the splendid attitude of Mohabet, when curbing by the strong arm even of rebellion, the license of

female influence over the enervated mind of an aged sovereign, and disposing at his discretion of the throne in the event of that sovereign's demise or removal."

"Yes," I replied, seeing that unless I brought in a word or two he was likely to inflict upon me a summary of the whole history of Hindostan,—  
"Yes, those were magnificent times certainly; but, after all, the principal movers in them—Jehangire, Shah Jehan, and Aurungzebe—did not scruple to put everybody to death, even their nearest and dearest relations, who stood between them and their ambition."

"It was their fate," said the fakir, "their hard fate, perhaps; but they were not responsible; it was so written, and they could not avoid acting as they did."

"That is an argument," said I, "which I can never acknowledge the force of. You may as well kill me, and then say it was written; but, remember," I continued, laughing, "the camp is close at hand, and it is also written that you'll all be hanged if you do."

At this they good-humouredly told me not to be afraid, and in order to continue the conver-

sation, I observed, that a better argument might be urged in extenuation of the conduct of Aurungzebe and the rest, in the certainty that had they fallen behind in the race for power, they would themselves have been sacrificed by the dagger of their rivals.

“Who shall say?” was the reply; “the man who aspires to sit on a throne is not likely to content himself with a carpet; when the veins are overcharged with blood, it should be allowed to flow freely.”

“If so, it was high time for us to interfere, and put a period to such enormities: Fate *now* no longer urges whole families to cut each other's throats.”

“As for that,” said the Mussulman, “it would have been over long ere this, if the Sahib logue had never arrived.”

“How so?”

“When the star of the House of Timur was in the ascendant, we had a constant communication with Persia, and Khorasan, and Afghanistan, and men of valour and ability were continually flocking to Delhi with their retainers.”

“I understand—you wanted recruiting, in more

ways than one ; the sun of Hindostan was too enervating, and the Rajpoots were getting troublesome ?”

“ Not they alone, but the Jauts, and those rascally Mahrattas. The treachery of the half-Hindoo omrahs first gave to those tribes their importance, and then, the still greater perfidy of Saadut Khan Gaziuddin and Sufder Jung, became almost necessary to the continuance of our existence in Hindostan.”

“ Do you think, then, that but for Amed Shah’s invasion the Hindoos would have driven you from the country ?”

“ Assuredly I do.”

“ Then, why did not those patriotic traitors place the Duranee on the throne of Delhi ?”

“ By the Prophet, you have hit it,” they all exclaimed ; “ but *that* they neglected to do, and, but a few years later, when the hope of assistance from the North was completely cut off by the Seiks and Goorkahs closing around us, what saved the Mussulmans, think you, but the growing power of the Feringhees ?”

“ But,” said I, “ was not the Deccan always open to you for receiving recruits from the westward ?”

"No," he replied; "the subjugation of the Deccannee kings had reduced those countries to mere subahs—no opening was left for strangers, whatever was their rank or talent. You," added he, after a pause, "*you* manage these things much better; you refresh the soul of your army by repeated draughts from the fountain-head!"

"But," said I, "don't you think we could do still better by settling in the country? The Hindoos would derive great advantage from our assistance; and who knows but they might, in the end, turn Christians!"

"They?—never!" But, checking himself, he added, "not at least for a very long period. Mankind change their religion only from interest or from fear; and *we*, with both those inducements, made but few converts!"

"But is there not another inducement—persuasion?"

"Persuasion!" said he, "to grown men?—When, indeed, the Christians first came to India, they made converts, for they were looked upon by Hindoos as idolaters like themselves; but you have reformed in *that* particular,—you must now convince their reason, not flatter their prejudices.

Where is the religion now on earth, that can convince a full-grown intellect, except," he solemnly added, "our own? Allah Acbar Mahommed rus sool illa!"

This exclamation, delivered as it was with a tremendous effort as if to empty his whole lungs upon it, struck me as intended to convey something more than usually derogatory to the faith which they detested. I therefore remarked, by way of retaliation, that Mahommed, prophet as he styled himself, did not appear to have foreseen the progress his system was destined to make.

"Who shall say so?" replied the Syud. "He gave the first impulse, and others did but follow in the track which he laid down. The mind by which so many nations were put in motion, rest assured, was no common one."

"Why, as to that, fanaticism has often done the same. Have you not heard how the whole strength of your most powerful Caliphs was held in check by the preaching of one obscure priest, Peter the Hermit, as we call him, yet no one styles *him* a great man?"

"And why not?" replied my antagonist; "but because his enterprise entirely failed of its end."

Success points out the hand of God—and Mahommed, blessed be his memory ! succeeded."

"If his success had been greater, during his own lifetime, I should be more inclined to agree with you."

"Perhaps so," said an old man, who had been reclining on the pavement all this time without taking part in the discussion ; "we are more struck by the brightness of the sun than by the manifestation of its power in ripening our harvests."

"But the religion he taught," said I, affecting not to attend to this observation, "was"—

"Stop," said the old man, in a tone of mingled anger and enthusiasm, "recollect the fundamental principle of that religion is the unity of God. When the Koran was revealed from Heaven your religion had long ceased to inculcate that great truth. It had accommodated itself to the idolatry of Roum, and would have sanctioned the emanations and incarnations of the Hindoos themselves, if circumstances had so demanded. It was to recall the civilized world from such abominations that Mahommed (may he rest in peace !) was commissioned."



"It is rather difficult, however," said I, "to understand his doctrine."

"Difficult !" he replied, "that at least is a reproach it does not deserve ; for is it not written in the Koran, 'God intended his worship to be easy, else he well knew you would become hypocrites.' What does the Christian think of those words ?"

The tone in which this was delivered appeared to me to have something sarcastic in it, but on looking attentively at the placid countenance of my aged opponent, I found it so entirely destitute of any indication of the kind, that I felt quite ashamed to take any offence at what he had said. When, however, he went on to tell me that God had expressly informed Mahommed that the religion which he prescribed was the same that he had imparted to Noah, to Abraham, to Moses, and to Jesus, I could not help replying that I did not believe a word of it.

"No doubt, you *cannot*," said he, with great meekness ; "what we learn as children, grows up as part of our very soul ; but happy the man who has more powerful reasons upon which to ground his faith !" And as if to prevent any reply, he

closed his eyes, and gently fell back upon his pillow, as if to say, "Leave me, leave me to repose!" —a request which by this time I felt sufficiently inclined to indulge him in, for his last observation had struck me deeply, and I returned to camp in a much more thoughtful mood than I had ever before experienced.

## CHAPTER V.

## THE BATTLE OF DEEG AND ITS ANTECEDENTS.

ORDERS were now received that we should set forward on the march in pursuit of Holkar's infantry and guns, which were now generally known to have taken refuge in the Bhurtpore Rajah's country. The ground we passed over was for several days the same that we had traversed in our advance from Muttra. A great proportion of it consisted of sandy plains overrun with a low brushwood, bearing a small reddish berry, which many asserted to be esculent, and of a pleasant flavour, though, from the quantity I observed unplucked, particularly on our return, I should judge it to be neither. But occasionally the eye was relieved by extensive tracts of cultivated land on which the corn was growing most luxuriantly.

both in point of height and fulness of grain. It was quite distressing to witness the havoc which the march of so large a body inflicted upon these districts—though it is but just to our own troops, both European and native, to remark, that the damage occasioned by them was, for the most part, unavoidable; but with the auxiliaries, particularly the irregular horse that accompanied our march, the case was very different; every man seemed to make it a point to draw up and allow his beast to take a good feed whenever he had an opportunity, and not contented with this, he usually plucked as much of the green corn as could well be stowed away on his horse's flanks, partly to keep off the flies, and partly to serve as provender, till another such spot induced him to throw away his load in exchange for a fresh supply.

On the fourth day of our march we struck off suddenly to the westward, towards Goverdoun, where there was a neat residence, with a handsome garden attached, laid out in the Hindoo style, belonging to the Rajah of Bhurtpore; and on the 12th of November, we arrived in sight of Deeg, where we at length obtained sight of

the whole of Holkar's infantry and guns. This force, consisting of twenty-four battalions of infantry and one hundred and fifty cannon, was posted with its left protected by the ramparts of Deeg, and its right resting upon a small hill, which we concluded was of course strongly fortified. Along their whole front extended a wide and impassable morass, and their rear, in like manner, was covered by a species of lake or embanked inundation, between which and the walls of the place there was only a narrow passage completely commanded from the ramparts of the town. The position was obviously one of great strength, if the enemy had known how to make the most of it; but, instead of fortifying their right, they seem to have allowed themselves to believe that we intended to attack their left; notwithstanding the morass and the citadel of Deeg, which so effectually covered it. They were, no doubt, led into this error by the crowds of officers that, as soon as our camp was pitched, posted themselves on a small elevated spot in front of our right, in order to get a clear view of their position; for, towards sunset, they brought some heavy guns to the edge of the morass, and com-

manded that point, although, from its distance and height, they ought to have been aware that their shot could have done no execution. Whether General Fraser, who was in command of our little army, took credit for this point, I know not, but as soon as evening closed in, he gave orders for everything being in readiness for an attack of their extreme right by daylight on the following morning; for which purpose two brigades of infantry, and all the regular cavalry we had with us, were to break up from our position at two in the morning, leaving the remaining brigade to follow as a reserve, under the protection of which the baggage of the army was directed to shape its movements.

The eve of a general engagement ought, one would imagine, to be a moment replete with serious reflection even to the most unthinking; but the habits of military men lead them so much to avoid any appearances, which, in the eyes of their comrades, might be at all liable to misinterpretation, that a casual observer, at such a season, would scarcely imagine that anything at all out of the ordinary routine of a camp life was about to take place. As the evening closes in, however,

the groups of officers separate into smaller parties than usual, they are seen walking two and two in earnest conversation, and bosom friends seek each other out from distant parts of the encampment to enjoy a long, and perhaps a last, conference with each other. Dinner parties, too, are everywhere to be seen. In those days there was scarcely such a thing as a mess in any but the King's regiments—and probably there is not an officer in the whole camp who, on that occasion, takes his meal alone. My engagements led me to the park, where stood the tent of a school-fellow of mine who had but very recently joined the army, and, as his guest, I dined in company with some young artillery and engineer officers. Here, though the conversation was a good deal engrossed by the “coming event,” it was far from casting any shadow on our spirits, the only long face of the party being that of a young man named Bowyer, who, being an unattached officer, was afraid that he was likely to be denied the credit of being in the expected engagement. He was a sharp, clever little fellow, and had distinguished himself at the storming of Hinglisghur at the close of the last campaign, and subsequently

in Colonel Monson's retreat ; but afterwards, falling into ill health, he had been left behind, when his corps, the 12th Native Infantry, accompanied the Commander-in-Chief in the *dour* after Holkar's cavalry, and had ever since shared the tent of one of the artillery subs. To relieve his anxiety, we resolved ourselves into a council of war, and after many sage schemes had been proposed and rejected, it was finally determined that he should forthwith write to Colonel Monson, and offer himself as a volunteer for His Majesty's 76th. No sooner said than done ; the note was quickly despatched, and the head-quarters of the first brigade being at no great distance from the party, the following very characteristic reply soon made its appearance :—"MY DEAR BOWYER,—I know you, I love you, and I esteem you ; come to me at two in the morning, and I will make you my aid-de-camp.—Yours faithfully, W. MONSON." At first we thought the old gentleman was merely gasconading, for no aid-de-camp was he entitled to, as his brigade staff performed the duties of one ; but the messenger having reported that he was sitting at the mess table with two or three other officers all in jovial spirits, it was resolved that the



invitation should be accepted, and nothing remained but to get our little friend mounted on the following morning. Accordingly the horse of one of the artillery officers, named Gowing, a stout Suffolk lad, was chosen ; it was, as befitted its owner, perhaps the largest animal in the army, whilst Bowyer was of such diminutive size that it was quite certain if once hoisted into the saddle, nothing but necessity, or a shot from the enemy, would ever induce him to dismount. This weighty point being arranged, we broke up with a hearty shake of the hand all round ; and I took the way to my tent, which, however, I had no sooner entered than I was joined by my friend the Captain Sahib, who told me that the commanding officer had had them all to dinner, and that I had been the only absentee ; “ though, to tell you the truth,” said he, “ some of them, I think, would rather not have been there, and particularly N——,” naming another captain of the regiment, “ who looked confoundedly down in the mouth ; only think of the fellow,—just as we were separating, he told us that he was quite sure he was doomed to be killed in to-morrow’s battle. Did you ever know such a fool ? But I say, my boy, it will be a step for you

at all events !” I took no notice of his last remark, but expressed my surprise that if N—— thought as he said, he did not at any rate keep the matter to himself. “Oh,” replied my friend, “it doesn’t surprise me at all : I always thought him a bit of a shy cock ; and I dare say the truth is, he is in a d—d funk ; however, good night,” and then checking himself, he said in rather a different tone of voice, looking round as if to see that nobody was listening, “I say, Frederick, if anything should happen to *me*, you know, you will be kind to the Begum, (a native lady to whom he was attached,) won’t you ?” I readily promised to do anything he required. “Well,” he continued, “there is no saying what might happen, but you will find my will folded up in my writing-desk ; so, once more, good night ; you have made yours I suppose ?” “No, faith,” said I, “I have not, for all my goods and chattels will scarcely do more than pay my Cawnpore debt ; however, see that done and I will thank you ; and if you would only tell me the name of little Rosebud, I would leave her something to remember me by.” “That’s capital !—What ?—remember a man she never saw ?” “Why, I thought you told me she had often been sitting at

the grating with the Begum when we passed by.” “ Did I ? ’pon my soul, I forget ; but this I know, that I have never seen her myself, nor even heard her named.” And away he went, leaving me in greater uncertainty than ever concerning the object of my visionary attachment. But youth and a good dinner are enemies to romance, especially in my situation ; and I was fast asleep almost as soon as I had begun to unravel any part of the mystery.

On the following morning we got under arms at the hour appointed, without beat of drum or noise of any kind, and immediately set out to make the detour of the marsh which lay between us and the enemy’s right flank. For some time we proceeded without attracting their notice ; but just as day was beginning to dawn, the head of the right column was fired upon by a small party, which had probably been posted in advance merely to give notice of our movements, and in an instant their whole line appeared to be on the alert, making preparations to receive us. We quickened our pace, and by the time it was broad daylight, found ourselves within a quarter of a mile of the elevated village on their flank ; then was first heard the booming of their rough and heavy shot

as they plashed upon the damp ground over which we were advancing, and then plunged into the column. "They've got our range exactly," coolly remarked the Colonel. "Form line!" roared an aid-de-camp, galloping towards us; and in an instant, ere another discharge could be effected, the first brigade advanced to the attack of the village. It was strongly occupied, and appeared to be well fortified; but on a nearer approach, its defenders were found to be covered by nothing more than the high mud enclosures common to that part of the country, which quickly crumbling beneath a shot or two, the troops charged up the face of the hill, and the village was in their possession in the course of a few minutes. From this spot a full view of the enemy presented itself. It was now evident that they had attempted to change their front and form across the neck of land extending between the two inundations; but their battalions, though regularly disciplined in the European fashion, being rather slow in manœuvring, our attack caught them in the middle of their movement, and as they thought more of keeping us at a distance with their numerous artillery than of completing their position, only

three or four of their corps had come into the new line, the rest being arranged in a sort of echelon to the rear of what ought to have been their centre and right wing. Still, however, if we had proceeded further to our left, as was at first the intention, in order to get upon firmer ground, their position would have been a formidable one; but General Fraser, with great promptitude, directed the first brigade to advance upon the angle presented by their unfinished formation, with a view, I suppose, of entirely cutting off their left wing, which, in that case, would probably have been obliged to lay down its arms. But just as he was descending the hill for the purpose of superintending the attack, a shot carried off one of his legs, and he was obliged to suffer himself to be taken back to the village, in which, by this time, a temporary field-hospital had been established. The command now devolved upon Colonel Monson, who, without paying any attention to the rest of the army, rushed on in his gallant but headlong style, attacking battery after battery, till brought up at length by the guns of the fort of Deeg, which obliged him to halt. In this attack the European regiment fully participated, emulating, it was said,

the conduct of His Majesty's 76th, which led the column, but it is believed they had no orders for making that movement ; and the circumstance might have proved fatal to the remainder of our line, consisting only of two native regiments, if the fire of our artillery and the advance of the reserve brigade had not kept the enemy's left wing in check. It was at this period of the battle that my quondam friend of the South Barracks, now a cornet of cavalry, rode up to our regiment with orders for it to proceed quickly to the support of those corps ; and I cannot describe the singular revulsion of feeling which his sudden appearance occasioned in my mind. In an instant the memory of all my little adventures in Hindostan seemed to be annihilated ; and, notwithstanding the hideous din and slaughter reigning around me, I felt as if transported to the quiet room and cheerful society of my kind benefactor Michael Cheese. I strove even to speak with the cornet, if only to observe whether the same association would have recurred to him, but he was in such haste that I could not get near enough—he vanished like an apparition, and, strange to say, although I remained in the same camp with him

for several months, this was the last time I saw him. He died soon after the close of the war. But to return : The right, on being thus reinforced, soon drove the enemy from their guns ; but a far greater number of them escaped than would have been the case if anything like judgment had been displayed either by Colonel Monson, or by the Commander of the second brigade, Colonel G. S. Browne.

My own adventures in the engagement had nothing very peculiar in them ; and at the close of it, I wondered to find how much I had gone through with apparently so little effort. From the moment we got fairly on the flank of the opposing line, the affair became a series of sharp conflicts with detached portions of the enemy posted behind their guns, which, it must be confessed, they defended with great gallantry. But their brigades, if I may so term them, were so close together, that when we had mastered one, it was only sustaining a round or two of grape from their artillery before we were hand to hand with another. On one of these occasions the Subadar of my company was cut down by one of the enemy, who was about to finish him when I gave the fellow

what I thought a huge cut on the shoulder ; but I might as well have struck him with a riding whip, my sword made not the smallest impression excepting that of calling the Mahratta's attention to me instead of the poor Subadar, and I should most probably have fared but badly if Captain N——, my *predestined* friend, had not at that instant come up, and calling to me, "You should use your point with these fellows, their jackets are quilted an inch thick with cotton," run my opponent through the body. After this, N—— and I kept close together till the regiment was recalled. We passed through the enemy's bazar, where a terrible slaughter was taking place, of combatants and non-combatants,—of women and children as well as men. At the edge of the lake which was fringed with trees, under the shade of which some of the troops had just called a halt, we observed a party of Europeans firing across the water, and on looking in that direction, we found it was at some women who were hastily filling their jars, probably for the use of the wounded, numbers of whom had taken refuge in the town.

It was midday, and we were making arrangements for encamping on the field of battle, when



an accident occurred which, in addition to the loss we had suffered in being deprived of our cool and intrepid commander General Fraser, (who died a few days after,) very considerably damped the joy we experienced at having gained so signal a victory. On the right of our line, where the enemy had so long maintained themselves, some officers of the 15th were reposing upon the ground, under the shade of some of the captured ordnance and tumbrils, when two of the latter blew up, and, besides killing and maiming a great many sepoy, so dreadfully scorched Lieutenants Hales and Boyd that one of them died almost immediately, and the other, after suffering great torture, a few days after the engagement.

Thus ended the battle of Deeg, certainly the best planned and best fought action during the war, and, if we except the battle of Assye, against the greatest odds too. At Delhi there were ten battalions and three regiments of cavalry against 19,000 men, and sixty-eight pieces of ordnance were taken; at Laswarrie, eight battalions and eight regiments of cavalry (including three of dragoons) against 14,000 men, and seventy-one cannon were taken; but at Deeg we had only eight

battalions and two regiments of native cavalry against the twenty-four regular battalions, which, under Holkar, had conquered all the other Marhatta chieftains, and we took from these eighty-seven pieces of ordnance, and many more would have fallen into our hands if the ramparts of the place had not afforded them protection.

Of our little party of the evening before not a man was hurt. Little Bowyer had accompanied Colonel Monson throughout the whole of the hot conflict, mounted on his colossean charger, without the smallest accident, although hundreds were felled around him ; and so well pleased was the Colonel with the assistance he afforded that his name was mentioned in the despatches among those who had most distinguished themselves.

## CHAPTER VI.

MILITARY LIFE IN INDIA—INDIA BATTLES—THE SECOND ADVANCE  
ON DEEG—DUTY IN THE TRENCHES—THE CAPTURE OF DEEG.

NOTWITHSTANDING all that has been said, ay, and sung too, about the horrors and the hardships attendant on the profession of a soldier, it is, in India at least, a very easy and a very gentlemanly one. Hardships, of course, there are, but, after all, they are not greater, except in very rare and desperate cases, than those which a traveller with a caravan has to encounter ; and I question much if in all those essential points included in the word “ comfort,” we of the camp have it not hollow in our favour. The youngest subaltern in the army has his little retinue of servants and baggage as readily under his command as if he were residing in some peaceable cantonment, far as the poles asunder from anything like the din of war and battle, with this slight difference, however, that it is somewhat more incumbent upon him to do as

others do ; and as all the world around him has adopted the strange fashion of breakfasting late, and riding some ten or fifteen miles at a slow pace before they sit down to that meal, why, he must even be content to do the same. But with this single proviso, should any of the requisites appertaining to the young gentleman's "set out" be detained an hour or two, or should his hooka be badly prepared, he would feel himself justified in invoking all sorts of vengeance on the unhappy culprit, and, in short, in considering himself as one of the most unfortunate persons in the world in having been subjected to the inconveniences of so untoward an accident. Then as to the horrors of war ; they are really so few, that even the most philanthropic mind would be at a loss to name a cheaper price at which the benefits of civilisation could be conferred upon our conquered subjects. For ours, be it recollected, have almost always been wars for the purpose of extending social improvement and good government, which is much more than could be said of any war in Europe. To be sure we now and then deliver over a Rajpoot state to the tender mercies of a Mahratta sovereign, or throw the too confiding Peguers under the feet

of an incensed white elephant; but these are exceptions to the general rule, and it cannot be doubted that the blessings of tranquillity, and security of life and property, which our new subjects acquire, much more than compensate for the rudeness of the process by which such an amelioration of their condition is usually effected. Even our military operations are attended with but little havoc or destruction when compared with those of Europe. The wholesale slaughter of an Eylau, Borodino, or Waterloo, would furnish a carnage sufficient for nearly a century of our Indian wars. Take, for example, the engagement which I have just described; although we captured so many guns and such an immense quantity of cattle and baggage of every description, arising out of the enemy's complete discomfiture and the surprisal of his camp and bazars, yet I do not believe his loss upon the whole exceeded two thousand men. My reason for this opinion is derived not only from what I observed during the battle, but from a close inspection of the field after it was over. For, as many of the captured guns and tumbrils were too near the walls of the fort to admit of our removing them during day;

light without great exposure of the men employed upon that duty, a detachment of artillery and pioneers, under an officer from each corps, was ordered to commence that needful operation soon after sunset, and it fell to my lot to command the supporting party. At first we proceeded with considerable caution, pushing our skirmishers silently forward to observe if any of the enemy were at hand, and, perhaps, engaged upon the same errand as ourselves ; but in a short time we became quite satisfied that the whole plain was deserted, and that we were at liberty to traverse it in any direction, even up to the ditch of the town. The result was that everything capable of being removed or driven off the ground was sent up to camp, and whilst this was being effected, I had leisure to reconnoitre the field with a perfect recollection of the places where the carnage had appeared to me to be the most frightful. The number of dead bodies (for the wounded had almost all been removed) was infinitely less than I had expected from the closeness of our fire and the sharpness of the struggle when their guns had afforded the enemy good rallying points. In the bazars, indeed, where poor non-combatants, even women

and children, had suffered, the numbers were rather greater; and on the margin of the lake, into which many of the enemy plunged in their confusion, upwards of two hundred corpses might have been counted, but, taking the whole together, from front to rear, and from one flank to the other, I am convinced that two thousand was the utmost they amounted to. Our own killed and wounded together did not, I believe, exceed six hundred.

But to continue my narrative.—It was not till several days after the action that we heard that the Commander-in-Chief, at the head of his flying detachment, had come up with Holkar at Furruckabad, surprised his camp, and completely chased him out of the Dooab. We remained in our position, however, some days longer, partly awaiting his Excellency's orders, and partly to accommodate the wounded, amongst whom there were some very bad cases. During all this time we were busily employed in collecting our booty, and in disposing of it for the benefit of the prize fund. It was curious to see officers who had so lately been distinguished for their gallant conduct in battle now performing the part of auctioneers,

and vaunting the good qualities of horses, camels, and bullocks ; recommending the elegant patterns of silks or chintzes ; or suggesting that certain howdahs and trappings had belonged to Holkar himself, in order to keep up a competition amongst the bidders. But, notwithstanding all their efforts, never were useful cattle of all descriptions—never was finery—never were curiosities even, at such discount ; even the assurance, that the purchases were not to be paid for till our prize money should be issued, was insufficient to keep up the prices of the several articles to anything like their real value. This was too great a temptation for many a poor sub (myself among the rest) ; some purchased horses enough for the suite of a general officer ; others clothed their servants from head to feet in the most fantastic liveries ; and others again purchased on credit in order to raise a sum of money by an immediate re-sale whatever the loss might be. But all were wofully deceived in the end,—the amount expended was stopped from our pay at the close of the campaign, when we stood in greatest need of cash ; but our wretched pittance of prize money did not make its appearance for ten long years after !



It was in the beginning of December that we commenced our second advance to Deeg, accompanied by the heavy battering artillery before mentioned, which, to me at least, was an interesting novelty. In other respects, too, the advance of the army was arranged differently from what it formerly had been ; no longer having the protection of a river on one flank, and being still pestered by swarms of horse in every direction, we were obliged to move in an immense square with the whole of our baggage and camp followers in the centre. The appearance of this enormous mass, whenever an accidental rise in the ground enabled one to take a view of the whole array, was exceedingly grand and imposing, and finely calculated to impress the mind of a young soldier with the great defensive advantages of exact discipline. The interior of the square exhibited, it is true, the same heterogeneous assemblage that I formerly attempted to describe, but the boundary line by which it was fenced in was more firm and compact. No sooner did the enemy shew himself in force in any quarter than the square was halted, and such a formidable bulwark of infantry, cavalry, and artillery was established between him,

and what the moment before appeared to be a disorderly crowd almost inviting attack, that he instantly paused, and after surveying our line attentively for a few moments, as if to discern some vulnerable point, drew off again in utter despair of being able to make any impression upon it. On these occasions not a shot was fired on either side,—the Mahrattas indeed seemed to have but little or no artillery with them, and ours had now acquired so much confidence in themselves, and such a contempt for the enemy, that nothing short of an actual attack would have induced them to make a discharge. Considerable improvement, too, had taken place in our order of march, so that these occasional pauses had but a trifling effect in retarding the advance of the army. The heavy park, the slowest moving body in the mass, and, therefore, in a great measure, the regulator of the movement of the whole, paid no attention to these haltings, but availed itself of their occurrence by closing up to the advanced guard so as to get the start of the columns originally abreast of it. It was beautiful at those moments to witness the exertions of the elephants employed in pushing on the largest of the guns,

when, from the badness of the roads, the long trains of bullocks in draught were completely brought to a stand. Often did I see those sagacious creatures, one at each wheel, and one at the muzzle—the former tugging with their pliant trunks entwined among the spokes, and the latter straining his mighty force to push on the gun, but waiting till the others, aided by the draught cattle, had taken wind so as to secure a long pull, a strong pull, and a pull altogether.

It was on the 13th of December that, crossing a range of low hills in the vicinity of Deeg, we took up our ground for the siege of that place. Holkar had now resumed his former system of warfare. There was no bringing him to action; and when we finally descended upon the plain, where our camp was to be pitched during the ensuing operations, five columns of smoke, in various directions, indicated pretty correctly that he was determined to lay waste the country, and to surround us with a desert wherever we ventured to post ourselves. This mode of annoying us, however, seemed only to inspire our veteran Commander with new energy; and we had hardly settled ourselves in our tents, after the day's

march, when orders were issued for the reserve and a strong detachment of artillery to leave camp at dusk, and to attack a fortified village and garden which appeared to be situate near the walls of the place, and which, it was supposed, would afford us an excellent position for breaking ground that very night, and opening the trenches in form. Our regiment was in the list of those to be sent on this service ; and Captain N——, with whom I had lately been upon very intimate and friendly terms, invited me to take dinner with him before setting out. He was in high spirits, talked as usual of promotion and prize money, and told me we should probably have a sharp brush of it, for that Holkar had rallied the remains of his army, and entrenched them under the walls of the fort. He speculated in a fine vein of enthusiasm on the possibility of our surprising their entrenchments, and forcing our way with the fugitives into the place ; or of taking possession of one of the gateways, and keeping it till the rest of the detachment came to our support. In short, we were full of zeal and high spirits, and it was not till the near approach of the hour for assembling the men that we rose from table to prepare ourselves

for action. I was soon ready ; but observing that my friend was longer in putting on his accoutrements, and that he had left the tent, I was going to look for him, when, on passing out, I saw him on his knees, between the *khanauts*, engaged in earnest devotion. I instantly, of course, retreated into the tent to wait for him, but he observed that I had noticed him, and coming in immediately after, "I am afraid, Frederick," said he, "I have been keeping you waiting ; but I always make it a point to say my prayers when setting out upon service. You, I suppose, are too young to attend to such things?" I attempted to evade his question by a laugh, but was conscious of a blush whilst I did so, and I could not help feeling a certain degree of augmented respect for his character in consequence of what I had witnessed. He did not, however, insist upon continuing the subject, but gently clapping me on the shoulder, "Never mind," said he, "all in good time ; but rely upon it, you would not fight the worse on that account ;"—and certainly no man ever more completely exemplified the truth of his own maxim, for he was on all occasions the most cool and collected, and, at the same time, one of the most adventurous of

our band. Soon after sunset we moved towards the point of attack, which was in front of what was called the Shau-bruge, a sort of fort—not a single bastion, as the name would appear to indicate—connected with the walls of the town, but built in so high and commanding a situation, as to render its possession decisive of that of the whole place. The column took the direction of a small mud-fort or *ghurry*, having an enclosed garden and a village nearly surrounding it, a post which might easily have been defended if the enemy had thought proper, but, though marks of recent occupation were everywhere perceptible, not a man was to be met with. Here we halted, and on reconnoitring to the front, the bastions of the place appeared to be so near to us—looming large, as the sailors say, in the duskiness of the faint moonlight—that it was deemed advisable to break ground on the spot, and commence our trenches without farther delay. If the enemy had favoured us with a shot or two at this moment, it would have been of great service, by enabling us to calculate our distance with at least somewhat more precision than was done in the present instance. As it was, however, we had none

but blind guides to follow, and accordingly our trenches were marked out, and the spot for our breaching battery eventually fixed upon at the distance of nearly eight hundred yards from the place. In those days, the mode of conducting our sieges was as simple and summary as the most unscientific or impatient commander could desire. A detachment was ordered to approach the fort, as near as possible during the darkness of the night, to erect a breaching battery, and to get guns into it as quickly as possible; no approaches were formed, nor was much attention paid even to the establishment of a communication with the camp; but the party thus isolated, relieved every night, however, was presumed to be quite competent not only to defend itself, but to effect a breach in the walls of the place, and as soon as the latter task was completed, an assault was ordered, and the affair brought to an end or begun afresh, just as Dame Fortune felt disposed to favour the besieged or besieging party.

When day-light appeared, we found ourselves under wretched cover, on two sides of a square enclosure, the ditch of which had, in some places, been deepened into a trench, though in others it

had merely furnished the men with an excuse for laying themselves down to sleep, under the idea that the trench was ready formed to their hands. But this was not the only inconvenience ; so eager had the engineer been to take possession of this position, that it totally escaped him that one portion of it, being at right angles with the rest, was very likely to be enfiladed by the fire of the enemy. At the salient angle formed by these two lines, a spot had been fixed upon for a breaching battery, and some progress had already been made in erecting it, by cutting away part of a small hillock, and forming embrasures in the side which sloped towards the enemy. In this a couple of guns and a howitzer were placed for the present, the rest of the artillery we had with us being concealed in the village immediately in our rear. This was our position, contracted, indeed, from the limited strength of our detachment, but still more confined than there was any necessity for, in consequence of the unskilful manner in which our men were huddled together. That of the enemy, on the contrary, was every way formidable. The great bastion of the Shau-bruge towered to a commanding height in front of us ;



but, instead of being open to attack on either the right or left, as we had supposed, it was supported by lines of entrenchments traced on the side of a gentle slope, and thickly planted with artillery. On their left, this entrenchment appeared to curve towards us, and at its extremity stood the fort of Gopaul-ghur, which was strongly occupied by matchlock men, who, from their position, could see into the rear of the left, or retiring flank of our trenches. These matchlock men, too, so completely commanded the ground to the rear of our post, that all communication with the camp during the day was obliged to be carried on by individuals availing themselves of the protection of such huts, trees, or inequalities of the ground as happened to lie in their route, and, where no such cover presented itself, by literally running the gauntlet of the enemy's fire—both cannon and matchlock—which latter, by the way, is effective at the distance of two musket shots, if not considerably farther.

Such, however, was the respect in which we were held, that not a shot was fired until the enemy had apparently satisfied himself as to the extent of our force, and our intention to establish

ourselves where we stood, without approaching any nearer to the fort. This gave us a respite of a few hours ; but at length they opened upon us, and no sooner did they so, than the extreme faultiness of our position became evident. They commenced with shells, a novel kind of ammunition in the hands of the natives ; but our men, knowing very well where they had been procured, (they had, in fact, been taken by the Mahrattas during the retreat of the preceding year,) very good humouredly called out, " thank you, Colonel Morrison," whenever any of them exploded. This good humour, however, was very nearly being put a stop to, for one of them falling in that part of the trench which I have mentioned as being enfiladed, killed and wounded no fewer than thirteen men, and caused such a sensation, that Colonel Don, the commanding officer, directed four field pieces to open upon the enemy from the village in our rear, in order to silence their fire. Here again, however, we had the worst of it ; the enemy concentrated the fire of between twelve and fifteen guns upon the spot, and never shall I forget the clattering and havoc which they occasioned. In an instant, almost every house in the

village was levelled to the ground, and our light guns stood so completely exposed to metal much heavier than their own, that, although they continued to blaze away with spirit, they must in a very short time have been destroyed, if the Colonel had not given prompt orders for their being withdrawn. But, what is extraordinary, the enemy, instead of pursuing their advantage, ceased to cannonade us as soon as we had left off firing, and as if enough had been done to vindicate their reputation, remained quiet during almost the whole day.

This was my first tour of trench duty, and as there was a good deal of novelty and excitement in it, I cannot say that I found it at all irksome. But it must be confessed that, all things considered, the duty of the trenches is less congenial to the spirit of a soldier than good, honest fighting on the open plain. The idea of sitting behind a bank of earth, as if afraid to be seen, without being allowed to return a single shot, although not a feather or the peak of a cap can be shewn above the trenches without instantly being fired at, is terribly annoying to the men, and very liable to affect their spirits if continued for any

length of time. The activity and excitement of battle set the mind completely above all thoughts of danger, but the passive courage required in the trenches is quite of another description; and to see a comrade stretched dead at your feet, at a moment when you had no reason to believe him in any way exposed to such an accident, has all the awfulness with which the sudden and unexpected decease of an individual in the bloom of life and in ordinary society is attended. I know not whether these reflections had obtruded themselves upon my mind on the morning in question, but certain it is I was conscious of a nervous feeling which almost made me doubt the reality of that courage I had now begun to give myself the credit of possessing. An accident, however, reconciled me to myself. When the firing began, the troops had been directed to sit quietly in the trenches, each man with his musket by his side; and the officers selected convenient spots close at hand, where they sat together in little parties amusing themselves with conversation. It happened that the commanding officer, with his attendant staff, took up his station with our regiment, and, in the scramble for places, seated

himself close by my side, with his legs stretched out towards the rear, and his back leaning against the loose bank which formed the parapet of the trenches. It was just at this period that Colonel Monson's shells were flying about us ; and we were remarking how little the enemy seemed to understand the different lengths of fuze, when the sentry called out, "shot !" and at the same instant one of the shells entered the bank immediately at our backs, proclaiming its position very distinctly by the loud hissing of its fuze. It burst, however, in a second or two, and merely covered us with a shower of dirt ; but the squeeze which the worthy old Colonel gave my arm as he leaned forward, expecting the explosion, convinced me that courage, however it may outwardly manifest itself, by no means consists in a total abnegation of all personal sense of danger.

It was some days before I again went down to the trenches, and during the interval nothing worth recording occurred. In camp everything went on much as usual, excepting, indeed, at head-quarters, where the General, we were told, had lost all patience, in consequence of the slow progress of the siege, and was become so out of

humour that it was reckoned a service of danger to approach him. He passed a great part of his time in pacing up and down before his tent, continually asking for fresh reports, and sending in quest of information of how matters were going on in the batteries. The incessant popping of small arms, together with the still increasing roar of cannon, without anything decisive having been effected, bade fair almost to drive him out of his senses. And well, indeed, they might; for, with the exception of our few battering guns and one or two mortars, the firing was entirely on the side of the enemy; and an unconcerned spectator viewing, for the first time, both our works and those opposed to them, would certainly have felt some difficulty in pronouncing whether we were the beleaguered or the beleaguering party. The trench guard, as I found when my second tour of duty arrived, occupied the same position as before, without any attempt having been made either to carry on approaches towards the fortress, or even to extend our front, so as to obviate the inconveniences to which the faulty construction of our trenches exposed us. A small detached battery had, indeed, been planted two or three

hundred yards to the left, but this was more with a view of establishing a cross fire on the breach than for any other purpose; and all that had been done to protect the men posted in the enfiladed branch of our trenches, was the construction of some half-dozen of traverses, placed almost as near to each other as the companies in close column of grand divisions. The breaching battery had been armed with ten heavy guns, but was still the same irregular cumbrous mass of earth and fascines which I had before left it, with embrasures so long and crooked that it must have been no easy matter to point through them. Still, with all these disadvantages, the artillery had managed to keep up a steady fire from it, and had brought down a good part of the great bastion and adjoining gateway, which latter, fortunately, was of brick work, and greatly aided them in forming a good breach.

Matters went on in this way till the 23d, when, in defiance of all the odds against us, an assault was ordered. It took place at night, and the confidence of the enemy in their own strength proved to be the leading curse of their discomfiture; for, as they never imagined we could have the bold-

ness to attack the breach as long as they had so large a force entrenched to the right and left for its defence, they appeared to have lost all concert and command of themselves when they found how completely they had miscalculated the extent of our enterprise. Some of the more cautious advisers about head-quarters did, indeed, recommend that the fort of Gopaul-ghur, and the entrenchments on the left of the breach, should be stormed in the first instance, and the remainder of the attack reserved for the following morning; but in this case the boldest course of action was undoubtedly the most prudent. The attack, therefore, took place in three columns—those on the flanks being directed against the enemy posted on either side beneath the walls, and that in the centre against the breach. The plan succeeded admirably. The columns to the right and left, having a shorter distance to traverse, were first engaged; and the people in the fort were apparently so much taken up with what was passing in those quarters, that the centre column advanced to the foot of the breach almost unperceived, and, there being no ditch, and the ascent though steep being both firm and broad, gained the summit



after a short but severe struggle—which, however, considering the arduous nature of the undertaking, cost us a much smaller number of killed and wounded than might have been expected. Amongst the former was my gallant little friend, Bowyer, who had so greatly distinguished himself in the battle of the 13th of November. By some accident he seemed to have been separated from his men during the darkness of the night, and on the following morning we found him at a considerable distance lying on the ground quite dead, and literally almost cut in two by a sabre wound.

The actual loss of the enemy was not great, except, perhaps, in the immediate neighbourhood of the breach; but the panic which our unexpected success occasioned was of much greater importance to us than the mere amount of killed and wounded, however great, could have been, for it induced them to evacuate the town the morning after the assault, and to surrender the citadel on the following day.

I was not myself engaged on this occasion, but had an opportunity of examining the field of battle early the next morning. The wounded, as usual, had either been conveyed away by their

friends, or, which is not improbable, our men had despatched all who fell under their notice ; for I observed only one poor wretch alive. His thigh had been broken by a musket ball, but, as he was otherwise uninjured, he was sent up to camp to be taken care of, and the medical officer of the horse artillery took charge of him. The history of this poor creature was nothing but one unvaried train of misfortune. He told us that he had been pressed into Holkar's service, but could give little or no account of the country from whence he came. He had received no pay, but subsisted in common, with a few others, entirely upon plunder or occasional distributions of grain by the sirdars. When he fell into our hands, his appearance plainly told that his fare could not have been very plentiful, and as to clothing he had scarcely sufficient to cover him. He accompanied our camp to Bhurtpore, and when the horse artillery and cavalry marched in pursuit of Ameer Khan, he was turned over to the care of an officer in the park, who, however, being shortly after wounded and obliged to quit the army, gave charge of the poor man to his brother, a medical officer belonging to the Bengal establishment, but at that

period attached to the Bombay army. This gentleman completed the cure of his wound, and on the return of General Jones's army to Bombay, sent the man in charge of a couple of Arab horses on board a ship bound for Bengal. The ship, soon after quitting Bombay, was captured by a French privateer, and carried to the Isle of France, where the poor man, speaking a language which nobody—not even the ship lascars—could understand, was taken for an impostor, and subjected to severe treatment. Finding, however, that they could make nothing of him, and that he was a cripple from his wound, the authorities on the island exchanged him for an able bodied seaman, and sent him in a cartel to Bengal. Arrived in Calcutta, he was found out by the brother of his last protector, and employed by him as chokedar over his bungalow at Dum-Dum, but, just as the poor fellow began to think that at length he had found a secure asylum, he was bitten by a dog that had accidentally gone mad, and died of hydrophobia.

## CHAPTER VII.

## NATIVE LANGUAGES.

[THE autobiography of the Major breaks off for a time, and it is difficult to trace where he was stationed after the close of the Mahratta war. Inaction, however, was evidently his lot, and he would seem to have consumed the ample leisure of an Indian officer in studying the languages of the country. I find among his papers some observations on the study of Oriental Literature worthy of preservation.]

Let those who are spitefully inclined to the literature of India sneer as much as they please; for my part, I almost entirely attribute my poetic turn of mind to the perusal of its lighter and more frivolous works, and, independent of this, feel grateful for the relish and zest they gave

me for the study of the more solid and philosophical writings of the country :—should the uninitiated smile at the confession of my having derived what poetic vein I possess from such books as the *Bāghobahār*, *Goolibahāwali*, and *Prem Sāgar*, it is easy to silence them with the authority of our great poets, Shakspeare and Spenser, who were wont to invigorate their fancy by perusing just as childish English books as those above enumerated. Oriental works are sometimes designated by malicious Europeans “the *black classics*” by way of contempt, but they, from whom I have heard the expression, have never engaged deeply in the study of them, and act as unfairly as the Hindostanee would do who should rest the merits of our writings upon such books as *Tom Thumb* and *Goody-Two-Shoes*, or upon those fanatical tracts which are circulated to terrify the ignorant populace into superstition still greater than is habitual to them. I have somewhere met with the saying, that “Dunces always speak despitefully of Latin and Greek,” and believe that its spirit may be applied to many of those who are so inveterate against the study of Asiatic writings. The *Prem Sāgar*

I have heard spoken of with a peculiar ill nature and contempt, but I have a strong notion that this spleen is not so much occasioned by the demerits of the work, as by a feeling of religious rivalry. I have almost universally found the more unyielding Christian religionists among its detractors, who, if they could be prevailed on to venture so far, would, I have little doubt, from the very same motive, remain quite blind to the acknowledged elegance of the Koran. As I myself, however, am not so exclusively partial to the sacred writings of my own creed, I here plainly avow that, so far from being disgusted with the Prem Sagar, its perusal quite entranced my imagination! As to the silly ridiculous stories for which these people are so ready to reproach it, and which, with hot-headed bigotry, they sometimes cast into the teeth of their believers, they should recollect that Hindoos may retort; and be allowed even to have done so with justice by a certain class of countrymen of their own.

One thing I recollect well as the consequence of my new course of studies, viz., my emancipation from the usual prejudices with which young men

come out to this country. From an unremitted communion with ideas so dissimilar to those in which I had been brought up, I acquired a license of thought, which emboldened me to spurn many dogmas that had been thrust upon me in my earlier years. How delightful is the privilege of thinking for one's self, and questioning everything, never mind how much revered by the world, until proved to one's own satisfaction !

The Oriental languages, not excepting the Arabic and Sanscrit, are voted by some people a decided bore, and doomed to perpetual neglect. If they would keep their opinions and unmerited contempt to themselves, one would not perhaps care ; but they are never satisfied without attacking them and denying the smallest meed of praise to those who have chosen this pursuit. There is nothing extraordinary in people who live nearly all day in a billiard-room, spending their mornings and evenings in the chase, and whose listless minds soar not beyond the precincts of a novel, turning up the nose of disdain at Oriental literature ; but it is not uncommon to hear men of higher pursuits, men who have some pretensions to an acquaintance with classic lore and the English belles-lettres,

also adding their own more potent dissent to the clamour of the totally illiterate ; and I should be apt to feel humbled and silenced under the respectable weight of this latter body, did I not suspect that they are not quite free from jealousy and want of candour. I was once very unexpectedly gratified at hearing a gentleman of the medical profession, in descanting on the comparative merits of the young scholar, who goes out to India stored with Latin and Greek, and those of his fellow-countrymen who have dived into the depths of Sanscrit erudition in India, give his decided preference in favour of the latter. His arguments did not fail to convince me, and to lay the foundation-stone to the same structure of opinion that I myself had planned before, but to which my diffidence had forborne to give any reality. Setting aside the argument of which is the most important study, and confining ourselves to the question of which student has most exerted his intellect, and overcome most difficulties by his individual exertion, there is no doubt that the part the former has acted is mere child's play to that of the latter : the one has met with every possible assistance, the other been checked by numerous difficulties ;



yet it is not unusual to see the hero of the English birch rod, on his landing in India, puffed up with conceited prepossession, and unable to regard with any complaisance the indefatigable explorer of the venerable Sanscrit. Regarding the Arabic, I shall say nothing, except to offer a conjecture, that a perusal of some of the works in it might benefit a few of my biassed countrymen, and give them a more enlarged insight into human nature ;—the language is not without its encomiasts, among whom I may number that excellent lexicographer and bright Orientalist, Mr. John Shakspeare. It is to this tongue we are indebted for our first acquaintance with the learning of the ancients.

To the merits of the Persian, Sir William Jones has borne ample testimony ; and really, after adducing the commendation of a man of his notoriety, it seems quite superfluous to overwhelm a few comparatively obscure individuals with any more authorities.

If the calumniators of Oriental learning are no advocates for poetry, (elegant as that of the Persian is,) let them read the sage reflections of Sádi, or the moral and philosophical lucubrations

of the author of Ukhlaḡi Jalāli ; the letters of Ubool-fazal also, though written by a native of Hindostan, are not undeserving of notice, and have contributed to the usefulness of a pursuit so unjustly decried.

One passage in them I cannot resist the temptation to transcribe, as being well calculated to shame the philosophy of some Europeans who think there is nothing good contained in any of the Eastern classics : “ *The tongue is a precious jewel ; a thousand pities that it should ever be polluted by abuse.*” The language I frequently hear used by Europeans (and those, too, in a walk of life that ought to teach them better) towards natives is filthy ; indeed, the only thing which some appear to care to learn of the latter, is that scurrility of abuse for which low natives are so famous.

In talking of the lying propensities of the Hindostanee, it is a common custom to accuse their codes and books of an entire absence of prohibitions against this crime ; hence people say, How can it be expected he should speak the truth ?

I cannot answer for their codes, but in their works of literature that I have studied, I have met

with some excellent passages which entirely refute this notion. It is unfair to condemn thus ignorantly and dogmatically the settled principles of a nation ; and it is perhaps from erroneous notions of the above sort, which must affect not only the literature of a people, but everything belonging to them, that so little relish is shewn for the pursuit of the former. Even among Hindostanee books, I could recommend passages, the perusal of which would no doubt induce their despisers to pass a more favourable verdict ; the *Sabhá leilás* and *Rajneet*, in the Hindee line, contain many judicious remarks and useful lessons for the conduct of life ; and as for the *Mahá bhárat* and *Ramáyan*, I only wish I had time and money enough for a good Pundit to go right through them. Asiatic writings in general, it is conceded, are deficient in science and right principles of natural philosophy ; but elegance and poetical imagery pervade them, while sound moral doctrines and strength of reasoning are also to be met with.

I have been so long accustomed to see Oriental literature treated with contemptuous neglect, and talked of with a sneer, that I have nearly fallen into a habit of feeling ashamed to vindicate it ;

but now engaged on the subject, I am determined to do so with the necessary fulness and boldness. There is no good reason why the deep students of it should not enjoy some of the honours and estimation conferred by the world on those who have established a name for an erudite acquaintance with Latin and Greek. An officer who had recently arrived in India from England, and who was tolerably versed in the latter classical languages, and an author into the bargain, once had the effrontery to deny the right of the College of Fort-William to be called so, because, forsooth, there was nothing of comparative dignity and importance which its professors were employed to teach ; so difficult is it for people who have acquired a certain distinction in any one particular pursuit, to weigh liberally and candidly the merits of any other that they do not shine in ! A gentleman, also, a short while ago, in talking of the *Aliflailá*, (the Arabian Nights,) sarcastically called it the first of Oriental works, thereby intending to cast the reproach of puerility on the whole, in which he only shewed his ignorance and prejudice. The very study of languages is reviled by certain scientific people, who profess themselves to be in search of ideas rather than of words, as

if it were possible to arrive at ideas locked up in a foreign tongue, without becoming acquainted with that tongue, and as though the acquisition of new words were the only object of the linguist. Should we have had so many eminent men in our country if the above principle had been universal ?

What advantage did Addison and Johnson not derive from the study of the classics ? I know not a more invigorating pursuit than the study of an unknown language, if properly conducted ; the sound and wholesome exercise of the mind, even if it were the only benefit derivable from it, is itself a great thing ; it bestows a manliness and perspicuity of thought and dignity of action, of which I must declare I have found mere lovers of science sometimes deficient. So much trifling fiddle-faddle has evinced itself to me in the conduct of those who spend the greater part of their time in drawing, playing on musical instruments, or attending to the operations of a chemical laboratory, that I never could respect them. Nor does the study of a language, I confess, make a person more solid and philosophical when pursued as a mere pastime, or where pecuniary profit is the par-

amount object. Difficulties must be encountered, otherwise the mind will remain as stagnant as ever. The great fault I find with English novel reading is, that when I have finished the perusal of a novel my mind is left in a most uncomfortable state ; it is intensely interested in the scenes while the crisis is unknown, but then the spell is broken, and I rather feel a wish that I had never read it.

Now, the “*Bághobáhar*,” though nothing more than a novel, had not this effect upon me. I considered myself to be *industrious* while reading it, and herein lay the great secret ; the pleasing interest of its tales was nothing to me compared with the sterner study of its language and idioms, and the exercise of mind required to discover the true meaning of its obscure parts. In the perusal of a novel of our own tongue the imagination even is not exercised, but merely gratified, and it is the knowledge of this that makes an English novel so comparatively insipid to me. The study of mathematics has been said to inspire a love of truth and to confer a soundness of reasoning, and I cannot help thinking that the study of a language has the same effect, and where the student pursues it

with an ardent desire to think for himself, and disdains to borrow the interpretations of doubtful passages exclusively from the mind of his teacher, it cannot fail to bestow an acuteness of thought. If, then, new ideas are also acquired from a new language, (and who can deny that they generally are ?) this latter study assuredly deserves a higher praise than its foes are willing to admit. I suppose all people will allow that the better the mind is, the better will an idea be handled ; and unless a person wants a new idea merely to play with, he is wise to prepare his mind for an honourable reception of it by a habit of strict and wholesome discipline. How tired I am of hearing people vaunt their preference of searching for ideas rather than for words, which is sometimes done, I believe, with the view of casting an additional slur upon the writings of the Orientals, or of offering an excuse for their neglect of the study of them, to which the heat of the climate is certainly unfavourable. I am afraid that many of those who thus express their exclusive partiality for ideas are also partial to indolence and ease. Ideas are purchased cheaply enough from the works of their own country, and to these they resort, proudly

imagining they are all that they need acquire ; yet, though the ideas and knowledge they find in them may be very valuable, they have done nothing but receive them from another, and the paths by which they have arrived at their new treasure are unimpeded and inglorious. I of course except works of an abstruser nature. For my part, I would much sooner consult a person who thoroughly understands Newton's " Principia," which may almost be considered the work of a foreign tongue, and can give a correct translation of the laws of Menu from the Sanscrit, or of the Koran from the Arabic, upon any subject, (supposing both to be conversant with it,) than the man whose learning may be more extensive, but whose ideas and knowledge have been acquired without trouble, from the simple reason that the mind of the former must be in a more independent and vigorous tone. I knew a student in India who, for originality of thought and depth of judgment, was unrivalled, but who, from an almost unremitted attention to the ancient languages, was deficient in English literature ; but this did not appear to give him any concern—his mind



was ever in the most healthy and equable state—he enjoyed for a number of years the enviable gratification to be derived from the successful opposition of difficulties, and the emulation of pushing himself on by his own energy and exertions; and though he was ignorant of certain facts and doctrines which others had listlessly read of, or might not have so many English ideas as some who liberally borrowed them, yet he possessed no few noble native ideas of his own, and would not require many months of desultory reading to supply his deficiency of English literature.

The supposition that students of languages are the slavish adorers of words is erroneous; they receive ideas, I conceive, with as much complaisance, if they cannot acquire them with as much facility as others. What numerous novel ideas revolved in my own mind after I began to study the Oriental languages, and with what pleasure did I entertain them! An obscure passage in a work is enough of itself to engender a variety of ideas. How I have delighted to sit and muse over the “Deewan” of Háfiz, or the Bostán of

Sádi, discarding the Moonshee's assistance, and left to my own resources to conjecture what can be meant; and when I have discovered the undoubted purport of a puzzling passage, how has my industry been rewarded and the vagrant current of my ideas flattered !

## CHAPTER VIII.

## TALES AND BALLADS OF THE HINDOOS—THE PREM SAGAR.

It is astonishing that, among so many who have made deep research into the manners, customs, and literature of the people of India, none have brought before the world that which more than any other brings to view the character of a nation—I mean the legendary ballads and tales of by-gone days. In fact, there is such a complete silence in this respect, that we are led to suppose students were ignorant that, among the people of India, there are as many legendary tales of war as ever were sung by Norman bard. Some of these poems are really excellent. The story of Padmune, the bride of Rana Sing, for instance, who defied the Emperor Acbar in the fort of Chitar, and the tragical catastrophe, is so similar to the poetic fictions of our own country, that it is surprising no one has attempted to translate this inestimable poem.

Out of many legends, (the manuscripts of which are in my possession,) I have chosen the shortest I could find as a sample. These legends are generally sung by travelling gipsies, and others, who thus gain a livelihood. The minstrel is easily known by his little drum slung across his shoulder, or his *saringee* carefully bound in a piece of green cloth under his arm, a little cap stuck on one side of his head, his checkered *mirjace*, and long *dhottee*. Many have swords, but those who are poor carry a long stick over their shoulder, at the end of which is tied his little bundle, and perhaps a pair of shoes. It is only when he arrives near a village he puts these on, adjusts his little cap, tunes his *saringee*, and makes for the great man's *habalee*; or, if there are many people in the *cutcherry*, he goes there. He first commences a recitation in praise of the liberal, and maledictions on the avaricious. He then sings the exploits of some prince or chief.

#### THE BLIND ARCHER.

Meera Shâ, (or as he is sometimes called Michâ,) son of Timorlane, succeeded to his father's

conquests in India about the year 1405 of the Christian era. This prince, although possessing the same determined courage as his father, was less fortunate in his warlike expeditions ; indeed, he was invariably defeated in the attempts he made to increase his possessions, and even the excursions he made against the refractory Hindoo Rajas were not always successful.

The Raja of Cascar, a powerful Rajpoot prince, having refused to obey some arbitrary firman of the Emperor, suddenly found his domain invaded by a Tartar army, headed by the Shâ in person. The Raja, however, nothing daunted, gathered his followers and offered battle. As usual the result was unfortunate for the Mogul, whose troops were defeated, and himself taken prisoner.

The Raja shewed a generosity little known in those times ; for having obtained a settlement for the better security of his own principality, he escorted the Emperor to the gates of Herat, where the Mogul had chosen his residence on account of the salubrity of the climate, and replaced him on the throne, which had been usurped in his absence by one of the ancestors of that family, who ultimately became the rulers of this part of Asia.

The defeated and defected monarch could not relish this kind forbearance of the Raja, and the shame of being obligated to his dependent rancoured into deadly hatred for *his* preserver. He, however, concealed his hatred under the cloak of friendship, and one day sent for the Raja to attend a grand festival which was about to be held at the palace. The unsuspecting chief came, and while revelling in the pleasures of the banquet, was suddenly seized, deprived of sight, and thrown into a dungeon.

When time had somewhat softened the revenge of the Shâ, he so far shewed compassion to his prisoner as to allow him to be led out into the open air. One day, while the blind Raja was thus recreating himself, he came upon some Tartars, who, excelling in the use of the arrow and javelin, were opposing skill to skill among themselves. The Raja, in his youth, having delighted in these pastimes, requested to be allowed to shoot an arrow, and led by the sound of a Tartar standing and calling at the place where the target was fixed, he, to the astonishment of all, hit the mark. The Mogul, hearing of this feat, was incredulous, and ordered that on the

morning he would see it done again with his own eyes.

Thus far have I attempted to give an outline of the character of this Emperor, and the traditional story which related to his death. Let us see how the story reads in the ballad.

### THE BLIND ARCHER.

#### PART FIRST.

##### I.

O'er Herat's towers the morning dawn  
Scarcely yet had sped the veil of day,  
When from the gates came rolling o'er,  
The Mogul's powers, in bright array.

##### II.

The Tartar horsemen take the lead,  
Their band along the plain now spreads,  
And now they check each prancing steed,  
Which seems to spurn the earth it treads.

##### III.

The spearsmen came first breast to breast,  
Their shields across their shoulders flung,  
Each glancing spear, each glittering rest,  
A dazzling gleam o'er morning flung.

##### IV.

Were I to sing each warrior throng,  
And chiefs that day the Mogul led,  
The morning's sun would list my song,  
Nor end till night o'er heaven had spread.

## V.

Amidst the gazing crowd was led  
The chief of Cascar's broad domain,  
Blind, and a captive,—once the dread  
Of all the Mogul's glittering train.

## VI.

Silent he past—once on his brows  
A sudden smile did gleaming play,  
But ah! how soon that happier glow  
For dire revenge, had past away.

## VII.

The mark was fixed, and silence reigned,—  
Scarce could be heard a murmur low  
As stood the chief,—his hand retain'd  
The feather'd shaft and well-strung bow.

## VIII.

"Thy archer fame the Sultan heard,  
And doubted such on earth could be,  
He deems a falsehood told the guard;  
Shoot! that the truth the Mogul see."

## IX.

Thus said the Patan Osman Khan,  
The follower bold of Timorlane,  
Whose sabre gleamed in Ispahan,  
And Arab's daughters mourn his bane.

## X.

"Blind am I now, what heeds my skill,"  
Spoke out the chieftain Rulloo Sing;  
"Yet were the Mogul's self to will,  
Perchance my hand may guide the string."

## XI.

The Mogul listened, proud to know  
The homage of his enemy,  
For such he deemed these accents low,  
Shewed forth the spirit no more free.



## XII.

"Shoot! 'tis my will," he vainly cried,  
Led by the sound the arrow sped,  
And Meera Shâ, the Moslem's pride,  
Pierced to the heart, lay bleeding—dead.

## XIII.

What hand could paint, nor tell what tongue,  
The wild confusion that arose ;  
For each now deemed around him hung  
A mighty band of secret foes.

## XIV.

A hundred sabres gleamed alone,  
A hundred arms rose in revenge ;  
And the chief of Cascar's soul had gone,  
In Boncant's happier bowers to range.

The following verses are a literal translation of a ballad called Ameer Sing. I have followed the original almost line for line, so that any want of energy in the verse, must be imputed to the difficulty of conveying the sense and power of one language into another.

It was a custom, during the reign of the first Moguls, for the neighbouring princes of Agra, or wherever the emperor chose to reside, to mount guard before the palace. Ameer Sing was called from his castle, which must have been at some distance, as one of the verses says,—

"The Jumna waters safely past,"

to do due honour to the Mogul. He was at first well received, but a quarrel taking place with some courtier, he returned to his home in anger. This was magnified by his enemies to the emperor, as disaffection to himself; and so many tales, detrimental to Ameer Sing, were told to the royal ear, that his destruction was determined on. However, the prince heard of the Mogul's enmity, and hastened, with a large number of followers, to Agra, to clear himself of the imputation put upon him. He was received by the emperor coldly; but the latter, seeing Ameer Sing so well armed, dissembled his rage, intending to seize on him unawares. In this he was frustrated by the zeal of one of his Tartar guards.

## AMEER SING.

## I.

Seven days have past, yet Ameer Sing  
Comes not our throne to guard;  
I deem his heart hath rebel grown,—  
His hand is on his sword.

## II.

To Ameer Sing the tidings come,—  
“The Mogul thus hath said;”  
He, armed with dirk and sabre bright,  
Unto the palace sped.

## III.

The Mogul spoke, and darkly frown'd,—  
“ Your fault I do forgive ;  
Go with your followers to your tent ;—  
Thank Alla that you live.”

## IV.

A Tartar standing by the throne  
Said, “ Ameer, thou 'rt a knave !”  
Bright flash'd the Rajpoot's fiery eye,  
And swift he drew his glaive.

## V.

He stabb'd the Tartar to the heart,  
And at the door-way knelt ;  
But Gour Guzan, the Dheera prince,  
A blow behind him dealt.

## VI.

Now spoke the fearless Ameer Sing,—  
“ Thou struck'st a coward blow ;  
Come here, and meet me face to face,—  
Thy valour boldly shew.”

## VII.

Would that Chutor Sujan were here  
In Agra,—thou hadst fled ;  
Or see you trench which yawning lies,  
I would have filled with dead.

## VIII.

He drew his spear behind his ear,  
He bent almost in twain,  
And Gour Guzan, the Dheera prince,  
Was mingled with the slain.

## IX.

His followers at a distance saw,  
And rushed their chief to save,  
For they were Lathore Rajpoots all,  
The noble and the brave.

## X.

Now heard the Rajpoot's angry cry,  
And now the Tartar yell ;  
Now fierce the combat raged, and fast  
The Moslem warriors fell.

## XI.

The Moslem to his harem went,  
And thus in fear hath said,—  
“ A kingdom shall I give to him  
Who brings me Ameer's head.”

## XII.

Now Gocooldoss has heard this speech,  
And draws his sabre bright ;  
Five thousand men he takes with him,  
And rushes to the fight.

## XIII.

And now the Hindoo bands are thinn'd,  
But yet they keep the field ;  
Thrice rushed the fiery Tartars on,  
But thrice are forced to yield.

## XIV.

But Ameer Sing falls faint and weak,—  
“ Help ! or to death he'll bleed ;”  
An arrow drawn by Gocooldoss  
Hath done this cruel deed.

## XV.

“ Upon a charger lift me up,  
And bind me,” Ameer cried,  
“ And take me to my lady love !”  
This said, the hero died.

## XVI.

Away the horsemen flew with speed  
O'er jungly heath and plain ;  
The Jumna torrent safely past,  
Tartars pursue in vain.

## XVII.

And now they reach the castle gate,  
And tell a tale of wo ;  
How Ameer Sing had bravely fought,—  
An arrow laid him low.

## XVIII.

The tidings to the *undher*\* went ;  
She heard, but shed no tear ;  
Arrayed in splendour forth she came  
And knelt by her husband's bier.

## XIX.

"No flower," she said, "can always bloom,  
Nor *bulbul's* song be glad,  
And none may live who wars with fate,  
Why then should I be sad?"

## XX.

She calmly saw the funeral pile,  
Calmly the brightening flame,  
Then leaping on her husband's corse,  
She died,—but left a name.

## THE PREM SAGAR.

Amid a vast deal of fable and exaggeration, there is a strong vein of probability running through this legend, which seems to be founded upon historical facts, and is, perhaps, as true as the Trojan War. The assertion, that there were rival kings, and empires so near to each other as Mathaora and Delhi, that the Chanderee Raja was a powerful

\* The lady of the house.

prince, Benares an independent kingdom, and that the defeated Yudoobunsees retired to a fortified City in a circumscribed territory, allows the truth to peep out, and proves that this is nothing more than a history of wars between petty tribes, inhabiting tracts which, in all probability, were far less populous than at this time, being in a great measure covered with the extensive forests, which are herein described as such interminable jungles. Sir Walter Scott has observed, that the eras by which the vulgar, in remote ages, compute time, have always reference to some period of fear and tribulation, and they date by a tempest, a conflagration, or a burst of civil commotion. Accordingly, that Krishn was a cunning adventurer, who, with the help of his brother's strength and valour, took advantage of the unpopularity of the ferocious Kunsu to dethrone the reigning monarch of Muthoora, and carve out a principality for himself, seems to be near the truth, and is not without a parallel in the more authentic and more modern histories of all nations. The times were out of joint, as appears from the great war of the Kooros and Pandoos; these families, originally, it is supposed, from Kashmeer, or per-

haps still further north, from Tartary, and so far strangers and conquerors in the land, are almost prototypes of what subsequently occurred among the Mohammedans, whose downfall as the ruling dynasty, paramount of Hindoosthan, was precipitated by their intestine divisions, and the contests between Mooghul and Puthan, which have already terminated in the subversion of almost all Moosulman rule, hemmed in as it is at present between the Russian power on the west, and by the whole weight of British India on the east. Among the circumstances that give a strong probability to the story of Krishn, and his relationship to the deposed family and to the usurper, is the very great reluctance evinced by the latter to putting Krishn to death openly, which he endeavours throughout to accomplish by means which shall bear the appearance of accident or chance medley, a deference to public opinion favourable to Krishn's pretensions to noble extraction, and in strict keeping with the most probable points of his history.

But if the Prem Ságar be interesting as shadowing forth, however dimly, the ancient and obscured chronicles of past ages, it is not less so when

viewed as a picture of the manners of Eld in the east, which, on examination, will prove that there existed a very great similarity to those of the better known nations of very ancient times. In the Prem Sagar, we meet with descriptions of customs and weapons not altogether obsolete at this day, though superseded among those races with whom we are most familiar by others of more modern date ; yet sometimes, among the retainers of the more rude and isolated chieftains, may be seen arms of the ancient time ; and perhaps among the fastnesses of Chandree and other little visited fortalices of the Dekhan, may be deposited panoply, like that which furnished forth the legions of Yoodhishthira and Duryodhuna, 3000, or at the lowest computation, 1400 years before our era ; which last is a century prior to Pope's date of the siege of Troy.

The greater facility of acquiring Persian, added to the circumstance of few Hindoo books being accessible save under the difficult and mysterious veil of Sanscrit, has led most military men to pursue the former literature ; and, as a consequence, their knowledge of the ancient state of India is confined to a smattering of the reigns of half a



dozen of the more prominent Moosulman emperors of Delhi, the eldest of whom is scarcely of 800 years' standing, identical with the period of our own Norman Conquest ; while the whole of the purely Hindoosthanee history is a sealed book to the very men whose lives are passed among the posterity of the Sun and Moon, and the, to this day, sectaries of Rama and Krishna.

The Lookool stands a sentinel at our gates, still dignified with his noble patronymic,—the Uginhoree Deecheit, Bajpy, Oustee, the Misser, Tewary, Pandy, Oopadhya, Pathuk, Dooby, Chouby, Tribedce, Sambedce, elbow us in the ranks, and are registered month after month in our rolls, while we are in utter ignorance that these are cognomina from ceremonies as old as the Druids, or from learning, dated five centuries before a few wandering savages from the main peopled our own island, while Rome itself was still a howling wilderness, and the *Lion of Judah*, “that most ancient people,” toiled an o'erlaboured captive in the fields of Goshen !

The predilection for Persian literature may also be ascribed to our being early imbued with Moosulman fragments and chronicles through Spain, the

Crusades, and Turkey, from our boyish delights in the Arabian Nights, (borrowed possibly from these very Hindoos,) and from tales of genii and fairies, David and Solomon, with whom we are familiar from our earliest youth ; but it cannot be doubted that this preference has much contributed to keep us in ignorance of the current language of Hindoostan Proper, which in many districts is still a little adulterated by admixture of Persian words. For a late proof of this may be cited the translated documents published in the trials of Jypoor, many expressions in which must be wholly unintelligible to persons unacquainted with Persian or Oordoo only.

The histories of India, too, usually placed in the hands of destined sojourners in the land, are ill adapted to encourage them to study the language of the Hindoos. Mill more especially seems to assume rather the tone of a controversialist, desirous of throwing odium and ridicule upon that nation, than of a faithful and philosophical historian. He ridicules their pretended antiquity, which, however, on comparison with our own received accounts, brings the commencement of their Kali-youg to within 700 years of the Flood, while he

might charitably conclude the legends of the three former eras to be but exaggerations, monstrous, 'tis true, of traditions respecting the antediluvians, whose stature and longevity are in our own Scriptures shewn to have been far above the present standard. Indeed, if Lord Brougham, in his "Discourse on *Natural Theology*," be not in error, we may see in the Rocs, Seemorghs, Goorooros, Grifins, Dragons, and Cockatrices of fable, the lineal descendants of the real monsters of former stages of this globe.

In concluding these latter objects, we are carried, as it were, SEVERAL WORLDS BACK, and we reach a period when all was water and lime and mud; and the waste, without either man or plants, gave resting-place to enormous beasts like lions and elephants and river-horses, while the water was tenanted by lizards the size of a whale, sixty or seventy feet long, and by others with huge eyes, having shields of solid bone to protect them, and glaring from a neck ten feet in length; and the air was darkened by flying reptiles covered with scales, opening the jaws of the crocodile, and expanding wings, armed at the tips with the claws of the leopard! If the severer taste of Moses

led him to reject the traditions of such antediluvians, yet we ought not to condemn wholly the writers whose assertions, long looked upon as visionary, are reciprocally illustrating and illustrated by the researches of modern geologists who are daily giving a local habitation and a name to the Behemoth, and Leviathans of Scripture, and the marvellous monsters of profane writers.

Lord Byron seems to have had some vague imaginings. "Where," saith he, (*apud* Medwin,) "where shall we set the bounds to the power of steam? Who shall say, 'Thus far shalt thou go, and no farther?' We are at present in the infancy of science. Do you imagine that in former stages of this planet, wiser creatures than ourselves did not exist? All our boasted inventions are but the shadows of what has been—the dim images of the past—the dream of other states of existence. Might not the fable of Prometheus, and his stealing the fire, and of Briareus and his earth-born brothers, be but traditions of steam and its machinery?" Byron was probably quite certainly three-fourths in jest when he said this; yet, after all, to use his own words once more, "There is not so much folly as we may suppose,

and a vast deal of poetry, in the idea." Since the Kaliyoug, the duration of reigns of Hindoo dynasties is, in few cases, much beyond the usual average, although several postdiluvians are known to have lived to a great age ; for instance, Noah was a contemporary of Abraham's father, and Shem lived till Jacob was fifty years of age, or about the period when Menu is supposed to have written his Institutes, and Egypt, twin sister, (or more probably a daughter of Hindoosthan,) was already a flourishing people.

Mr. Mill is severe upon the puerility, incredibility, and indelicacy of Hindoo mythology, preferring that of the west, whose Ixion, Pasiphae, and the whole rabble of gods and goddesses *passim*, are only not more offensive because more familiar. He even gives the palm to Mexico and Peru, those darkened nations, who had not got beyond the all but barbarous expedient of a picture alphabet ! The astronomy, science, and military skill of Hind are alike decried by this writer, who seems much fitter to chronicle the idle declarations of the parties who assailed Warren Hastings, than to investigate the ancient history of the people, with whose soil and language he

was equally unacquainted. But so it is: and the chief source of the injustice and neglect shewn to the antiquities of this people, has been the ignorance or prejudice of their commentators.

Deeply imbued with western lore, men of literary habits, resorting to India, have been generally incapacitated for an impartial judgment of the pretensions of the east; and many, being of the clerical profession, have added religious disgust to other antipathies; thus Mr. Ward, in his excellent work, expressing his horror at the bloody sacrifices of Kallee, describes one by the Rajah of Burdwan, when he immolated some hundreds of goats and other animals, the whole temple being one slaughter-house, slippery with gore and filth, and resounding with the cries of dying victims; forgetting that such things are inseparable from the slaying of beasts, and must have equally occurred in the hecatombs of Greece, and the memorable dedication of the temple of Solomon, when 20,000 oxen and 100,000 sheep bled before the altar.

Methinks it were more liberal and more wise to consider that "tradition is general, and in the east especially is found to contain a large propor-

tion of truth, though ignorance and misapprehension, and a love for the marvellous may have filled the chasms with error." Thus the draining of Kashmeer, by Kushyp, may be elucidated into a fact, interesting to the modern geologist, as referring to a period when the waters covered the country; whence we may draw an anticipation that at some future time the lakes of America may be fertile valleys. The superstitious reverence for the ox points doubtless to a period when that useful animal was first naturalized in India and protected by a law for its preservation and encouragement; which, now that its original intention is lost sight of in the lapse of ages, has invested the cattle with a sacred character; and, indeed, it is not 200 years since the Emperor Juhangeer was obliged once to prohibit the slaughter of kine for a term of years, as a measure absolutely requisite to prevent the ruin of agriculture. It is not difficult to conceive that the same veneration for this animal might prevail in the Pacific Ocean, could we but imagine the islands to be cut off from all communication, the reason for tabooing the cattle introduced by Captain Cook to be forgotten, and nothing but their inviolability and utility to be recorded.

The Prem Sagar, as a text-book, will henceforth be in the hands of every officer of the Indian army who has hope and energy to pant for and obtain distinction. It will enable military men gradually to wean the minds of those natives, with whom they come in contact, from a debasing superstition on many points, which are in reality mere history disguised and exaggerated by priestcraft and cunning. In a late excellent little work, which we may, I hope, yet see concluded, it is said, that the natives of India, as a body, are more intimately acquainted with the Kooros and Pandos, &c., than with the modern victories of the last century. These traditions, therefore, so difficult to eradicate, may, by a more diffused knowledge of them among Europeans generally, give us weapons to combat the erring faith built upon them ; treated as mere histories of human beings, proved to be impious impossibilities as predicated of divine beings, they will find their own level as legends of old ; and no longer pernicious to the religious feelings, or degrading to the understandings of man, they may be gradually stripped of their absurdities and indelicacy, and form the groundwork of a sensible chronicle of Hin-



doosthan, incentive of honest pride and patriotism in her regenerated and disabused children, and a monument of the zeal and philanthropy of her enlightened rulers.

The strong affinity of some circumstances of Krishn's early history to those of our Saviour's, such as the massacre of the Innocents, the flight, &c., cannot fail to strike the student, and, together with the similarity of the names Krishn and Kristos, are undoubtedly singular coincidences. Mr. Colebrooke has devoted much time and research in the elucidation of the mystery, which, it seems probable, may have arisen from vague accounts of the Messiah's birth penetrating to India, and being rudely incorporated with the legend of Krishn, whose name, however, has no affinity with Kristos, being merely an epithet signifying black, his real name being Kunhya. However this be, it cannot affect the historical part of the Prem Sagar, which, as referring to events better known, and more prominent than the early childhood of the hero, is probably more consistent with facts in the main, since, though it would be easy to introduce foreign incidents into the obscurer years of the young conqueror, there must have

been less facility in tampering with matters which were familiar traditions among a people so tenacious of ancestry as the Hindoos, and in which the ancestors of many then living must have been implicated.

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[In 1813, Worthington appears to have returned to England on furlough, and without resigning his commission in the Company's service obtained employment in the Royal Army at a time when the restrictions on the age of officers (he must now have been twenty-six) were very slight; in fact, the Government was only too glad to swell the ranks of Wellington's Peninsular army with efficient soldiers. Whether our hero was in time to share in the Pyrenean contests nowhere appears, but he certainly had the advantage of serving at Waterloo *en amateur*, and has described the operations in Belgium with a degree of *verve* rarely approached, much less rivalled. The description is given in the form of a narrative of a young soldier, but there is no doubt that the Major was himself the spectator of the scene he has described.]

## CHAPTER IX.

## QUATRE BRAS AND WATERLOO.

It is needless to dwell upon the short voyage across that channel which has preserved entire, for so many centuries, the liberties of Great Britain; nor is there any need to recapitulate at length the events of an epoch so recent in the memories of all. Napoleon, that wonder of his age, after having, to all appearance, finished a career that needed only justice for its basis to raise him to the highest grade of human greatness, had suddenly reappeared upon the theatre of his glory, and, single-handed, without troops and without treasure, with only the star of his fortunes to direct him, had achieved, in a few brief hours, a conquest more remarkable than any to which he had directed the veteran legions of France. By the effort of a genius which difficulty but nerved with irresistible enterprise, an army sprang up in a day, and the trunk that had been

lopped of every goodly branch to furnish the funeral pile of Europe, sent forth fresh shoots, and germed anew at the magic of his name.

To extinguish this fearful meteor in its birth, the hosts of Europe were mustering far and near. The nations that had been his vassals were arraying to assert their independence; and she who had never bowed to mortal man, and who, single-handed, had held at bay the universal world, was looked to, at this crisis, with peculiar reliance. Small as was the army she brought into the field in comparison of the forces of her allies, which amounted to upwards of 700,000 men, they were the only portion of that mighty army that had not suffered repeated reverses before the Eagle of France and the Lion of the Desert.

Upon this multitudinous host, with a force scarcely one-fifth of their amount, anticipating the complete junction of its various parts, Napoleon fell with his usual rapidity and confidence. His aim was to beat the Prussians and English in detail, and with the terror of his prowess marshalling his route, to destroy, as he too often had destroyed, the more numerous, but less formidable armies of Austrians and Russians successively. The

general results are well known, but it may be interesting to follow the path of a young soldier through the events of that brief, but glorious campaign.

The ——— regiment arrived at its destination early in June, and joined the centre of the British army, disposed in a crescent form over an extent of about thirty miles, and communicating by its left with the right of the Prussians. Rumours of the French advance had from time to time been busy in the neighbourhood, and although the precise authority for such reports was unknown, they excited a degree of expectation peculiarly interesting to a soldier.

The rumours which had been thus awakening attention had, at length, died gradually away. All was silent and apparently tranquil. The mighty host rested passively upon its arms, and war might have seemed a remote contingency had not the very assembly of such an armed multitude reminded them continually of the proposed work of death. The calm was deceitful as that which so often precedes a tempest. Suddenly, at dead of night, a murmur ran along the line that Napoleon and the French were at hand; and, like a sudden gust of wind that stirs the multitudinous

leaves of the forest, it awakened every soldier to the possession of his confidence, and to the murmured expression of his stern delight. The rumour was followed by messengers speeding through the army, to distribute the orders of its great commander. The veterans of the Peninsula elevated their brows, and thought of the genius that had marshalled their resistless steps through so many memorable days. They felt that they might trust their fate to his guidance, and proudly conscious they were worthy to fight beneath his banner.

The points of attack being now developed, the extended line was to be condensed at Quatre Bras, by a flank movement; but ere this object was completely effected, Marshal Ney, with about a third of the French army, attacked that position in order to divert the attention of the English from Napoleon's grander attack of the Prussians at Ligny.

It was the morning of the 16th of June, James Morris, a man of my company, sentinel of an out-picquet, was posted considerably in advance of Quatre Bras, at the junction of a trifling lane with the main road. His instructions were, upon the advance of any body of troops, to fall back, swiftly and silently, in order to communicate the alarm.

His position was sheltered by a few trees and bushes that marked the junction of the cultivation with the road and lane. Suddenly he fancied he heard the sound of horses' hoofs at no great distance from his post. He sharpened his attention, and strained his sight; but though the sounds were distinctly approaching, he could not for some time distinguish the object from which they proceeded. At length there appeared at the turning of the lane an officer in a cocked hat and surtout coat, followed by a couple of mounted troopers, dressed in a uniform which it would have been difficult to assign to any particular nation. The peculiar physiognomy of the officer made Morris decide at once that they were French. I give what follows in the man's own words.

As soon as they caught sight of him they reined their steeds up to a walk, and approached with apparent nonchalance the boundary of his post. "My good comrade," said the officer, addressing him, "can you direct me to the tent of the Commander-in-Chief?"

He spoke this in perfectly good English, but with that peculiar accent which a Frenchman never entirely loses, and which is perhaps different from the

accented English of any other nation. Morris at least thought so, and demanded the parole.

"The parole," replied the stranger, "I have not learnt. I am a Prussian officer, as you see, and have come with instructions from the Prussian camp; but if you cannot inform me of the position of your head-quarters, tell me at least where I shall find the right wing of your army."

"With your leave," said Morris, seizing the reins of the horse, "I will conduct you thither."

"Not so fast, if you please, young man. I asked you merely to inform me where I shall find the right wing. I doubt whether you could keep pace with Bayard," patting the glossy black crest of his noble charger.

During this interval, Morris had been eyeing with a falcon's glance every change in the countenance of the stranger. In spite of his assumed composure and avowed object, he was convinced that neither was precisely that which it would fain appear. He was a tall thin man, of dark complexion, a peculiarly manly expression of countenance, and had the mien and bearing of a soldier. His voice was authoritative, and as he spoke, Morris found himself more than once im-



pelled by a power it was difficult to resist, to yield implicit obedience. Seeing that the young soldier still detained his reins, the stranger drew himself up, prepared to put his horse in motion, and said in the manner of one whose orders had never been disputed, "Stand back, sentinel."

This, however, was far from being the intention of Morris ; undismayed by the odds he must encounter, and determined, if possible, not to use his musket lest he should communicate a false alarm, he had summoned to his aid the resources of a genius which had never yet failed him at his need.

"Sacre !" exclaimed the stranger, half drawing his long straight sword, and urging his horse at the same time with his spur ; but, as the noble creature rose on its haunches for the onward bound, Morris jerked the curb with such violence to the rear, that, before the sword could leave its scabbard, horse and man were prostrate on the road—the latter disabled and nearly crushed with the weight of the falling steed. Almost before this reverse was completed, and ere the mounted troopers, who were at some little distance in the rear, could conjecture what was passing, Morris had seized the sword, vaulted lightly upon the back of the rising

horse, and urged him with the speed of the wheeling hawk to the encounter.

Astonished as they were beyond measure at the success and audacity of their assailant, the troopers yet prepared to make a stout defence, and Morris felt that caution as well as courage was requisite in attacking them. A perfect master of the beautiful horse he rode, which seemed conscious and proud of the accomplishments of its rider, he wheeled in circles around the heavier Norman horses of the troopers, and threatening them, as it seemed, on all sides at the same instant, inflicted more than one severe wound, while he escaped, as if by miracle, the weighty sweep of their broad sabres. At length, the rapidity of his movements brought his opponents' horses into an entanglement of the most awkward description. The leg of one had passed through the neglected snaffle-rein of the other, and rendered the animal for the moment quite unmanageable. The rider, instead of cutting the rein with a touch of his sabre, strove to disengage it with his hand; but before his object was half accomplished, his saddle was empty, and his masterless horse bounding wildly over the country. The other trooper, intimidated

with the fate of his companion, turned and set spurs to his charger, hoping to escape by flight; but his adversary, far better mounted, was in a moment at his flank, fully prepared, had he been so minded, to have finished the contest at a single blow.

Morris, however, had had enough of blood. Heated, as his passions were by the combat, his heart shrunk from the idea of even wounding unnecessarily an unresisting enemy. He called in French to the fugitive, "Pull up, or I'll pass my sword through your back, and you shall die the death of a coward." The trooper hesitated—he turned his head—he saw the raised sword within a foot of his body—he shuddered and reined up his steed. "Swear that you will make no attempt to escape," said Morris, receiving his sword.

"I swear—"

"By the honour of your Emperor?"

"By the honour of my Emperor!" and he hid his face in his clasped hands, as he thought how unworthy his conduct had been of the hero of Marengo.

They returned at a short trot toward the scene of action. There dismounting from his horse,

Morris raised the French officer gently in his arms, and finding him still too weak to sit upright, took him before him on the saddle, and proceeded towards the picquet. There, informing one serjeant Dryford of what had passed, he readily obtained his leave to bear the sufferer to the farm-house, while his post of sentry was relieved by the next for duty. The serjeant was about to despatch a file of men in charge of the other prisoner, but Morris exclaimed, "He will not escape, he has sworn by the honour of his Emperor."

"No fear of him then—ahem!" said the worthy serjeant, doing his best to clear his husky throat. "Those froggies—ahem! know what it is to fight under a great General—ahem! for that little Boney is, whatever people may say about poison and the French Revolution.—I suppose their swearing by Boney means the same as us swearing by Wellington, though I never in my life thought of swearing any of our lads by him; but I'll try at the next *cag*\*—ahem!" And although

\* The unmilitary reader may be glad to learn that the verb and substantive *cag*, signify to swear abstinence from liquor for a stated period, and the act of this oath, which is seldom broken.

serjeant Dryford was much too consequential a person to smile, he walked away evidently much exhilarated by the new and bright idea that had come across his husky fancy.

At the entrance to the farm, Morris met our Colonel, Gregory, who stared to see him mounted on a beautiful horse, and followed, as it seemed, by an orderly. When he had heard his recital, he grasped him warmly by the hand, and passing the highest encomiums upon his judgment and courage, promoted him at once to the rank of serjeant, promising him the exercise of his best interest to advance him by the first opportunity to a higher rank.

He would have committed the prisoner to his further care ; but Morris begged earnestly to be relieved, saying, that he was certain their line would be attacked that day, and he was, therefore, anxious to sustain his part in the engagement.

"Why," said Colonel Gregory, "I believe you are right in your supposition ; but what makes you so certain ?"

"I scarcely know. Although I heard upon my post no sound that could warrant an alarm, my fancy greatly deceived me if there was not a dull

species of echo in the air, that sounded like the distant thronging tread of a multitude. I put my ear to the earth, and it appeared more distinct; but as our own troops are mustering in this direction, it might possibly be their march which I heard, though I am almost convinced that it sounded from the opposite quarter."

"Return then to your post. I would not for any consideration interfere with a brave man's sense of duty. Your prisoners shall be cared for according to their ranks."

Morris retired greatly encouraged, and prepared to look upon the future in its brightest views. The news of his exploit spread far and wide, and he became the object of general attention. Even officers of rank desired to have him pointed out to them. His modest, but manly address completed the impression so favourably begun, and communicated an air of romance to the whole incident; and, as often happens, the success of a countryman against such great odds, at the opening of hostilities, inspired his immediate comrades with the most sanguine anticipations.

Glowing with the effect of his exertions, and the ardent confidence they had inspired, the young

soldier returned to his post of sentry at his own particular request, and when again relieved in the ordinary course of duty, chose a commanding position, close to the picquet, from which he could observe any movements in the surrounding plain.

His every faculty sharpened to the most intense vigilance, it was not very long before the indistinct impression of sound became strengthened into absolute certainty, until upon the most distant verge of the horizon the faint twinkle of the bayonet, and the dark lines of armed masses, caught the eye—the van of the left division of the French, commanded by Marshal Ney.

Still, as the nearer ranks grew more distinct to the view, mass after mass followed in succession, first as but dim, dark, horizontal lines, over which the twinkle of steel ran at times like phosphoric light, but growing in thickness with each passing minute, until something of their real form was defined, and the movement of their several parts perceptible.

It was a most interesting sight to all, especially to the younger soldiers. No eye could view unmoved the hostile phalanxes with which their own columns were so soon to mingle in fight;

and independently of such considerations, the formation of a body of 30,000 armed men upon the adjacent plain was an imposing spectacle, exciting powerful emotions. The union of so large a mass of living, moving, and sentient beings, in one and the same design, and that design the work of death—the docility with which for this end alone every sense and motion is schooled and trained—the waving of plumes, the neigh of steeds, the distant tramp of thickly thronging feet, the gleam of arms, and the clarion of the trumpet—the appearing and disappearing of the successive columns, as they surmounted the brow of an acclivity, or dived into the shelter of a hollow, while a thin haze of rising dust hung around their progress like the precursive vapour of a tempest, enhancing by the shadow of mystery the effect of the martial exhibition upon the fancy,—all this combined, in aid of one general impression, excited in a degree never before experienced the solemn and breathless rapture of James Morris.

He looked around on the vast battalia bristling with the weapons of death, extending as far as eye could reach, and apparently unbounded by the



limits of vision, and, for a single moment, his individual existence seemed annihilated by the contrast, and he felt, he said, as full often the wandering pilot has experienced amid the immeasurable wilderness of waters.

A little removed from the position he occupied, leaning upon the branch of a stunted tree, and gazing upon the changing scene, was a corporal of his own company, Carnford by name—a man of singular character, who had excited in him considerable interest. Little above the common height, and of unprepossessing exterior, nature seemed to have lavished upon his frame some of her boldest touches, neglecting all the softer and smoother graces of outline to strike out a figure that should impress upon the eye a sense of power and energy almost superhuman. His features were irregular, but expressive, and in complete accordance with the frame to which they appertained. It was scarcely possible to behold them without an internal impression that a fiery spirit, and passions vehement to an uncommon degree, could at times sweep over them like the whirlwind of the desert, and change them to an aspect far different from their ordinary composure.

His manners were strangely at variance with those of his rude associates. An undiscerning eye might have reckoned them those of the polished gentleman ; but more practised observation would detect an occasional shade of vulgarity or coarseness that seemed to imply his breeding to be the acquisition rather of later years, than the effect of early education ; and his knowledge, which even for the middle walks of life, was far from inconsiderable, was rather that which a vigorous mind had collected from the scattered materials in his path, than such as had been instilled by the discipline and method of a school. With his comrades, though held in considerable awe, he was generally popular, for his pride was too high to interfere with his relations to them. Morris had from the first felt favourably impressed towards one whose situation in the regiment bore so strong a resemblance to his own, and had contrived on more than one occasion to render him services which, though trifling in themselves, sufficiently marked his interest. These had been acknowledged with apparent warmth, and had led to an intimacy between them, from which Morris derived some solace in his new and uncongenial situation. He

had just been congratulating Morris upon his late exploit with all the warm expressions of a friend, and was now absorbed like him in contemplation of the approaching army.

All was now excitement in the British lines. Messengers had been despatched with intelligence to the General-in-Chief, and the strongest positions being occupied with our troops, the intervals were filled with many a ready row of bayonets, to give a stern welcome to the advancing enemy, who at that moment mustered nearly double their numbers.

The afternoon was calm and beautiful—a summer's day when the intensity of the sun is overpast, and the warm clouds are profuse of that glory which haunts his departing steps. Some of the weather-wise affected to predict an approaching change; but too many thoughts were turned on a tempest of another kind to heed greatly any atmospheric phenomenon. To an indifferent spectator the sky had appeared too beautiful for the scene that was to be enacted; and fiendish, indeed, must that storm be which harmonizes with the deadly enmity of man.

All were now in position, and a silence, deep

and impressive, fell over the awaiting ranks. The point or method of attack was the object of each individual's scrutiny, and it remained not long a matter of doubt. At about three o'clock a couple of dense columns of the enemy, with artillery and cavalry, severed from the main body, and advanced swiftly to the attack. They charged with the fury of a swelling torrent that threatens to sweep everything from its path ; but the British line was guarded by British bayonets, and British hearts sustained the shock with the valour that had so often triumphed on the same battle-field. The tug of war, the mixed tumult of horse and foot, the rolling of musketry, the heavy thunder of artillery, the smoke that, enveloping the deadly scene, confined the individual observation to a very limited field, and dimly and fitfully afforded glimpses of struggling figures intermixed with the wounded, the dead, and the dying. These are the accompaniments of the battle-field, and were not wanting on the present occasion, as swaying to and fro with each turn of fortune or adverse stroke the tide of battle rolled hither and thither ; now elating the soldier's heart with premature

triumph, now inciting it to fresh and almost supernatural exertion.

The regiment to which Morris belonged was in position on the right, close upon the wood of Bossu. The attack of the French, after lasting a considerable space of time, had ended in a partial repulse ; but their ardour though checked was not abated—and Ney knew well the importance of forcing a post, which preserved entire the communication between the British and Prussian armies. Finding his efforts on the left unsuccessful, and probably hoping that the right of our position had been weakened in its support, he now changed the current of assault upon the right, and brought the strength of his battalia to bear in closely succeeding columns upon that devoted point. It was then that the gallant — regiment suffered so severely ; for while engaged with a body of infantry in front, they were attacked on the flank by a corps of cavalry that, sheltered among the trees on their right, had waited this favourable opportunity. Before they could wheel round to present a front to this assault, the dragoons were among them ; and their endeavour to form into a hollow square, in the confusion of the rout, only served to

perplex them the more and place them at the mercy of the enemy, whose heavy sword hewed down their defenceless ranks on every side.

Mixed up in the dense confused mass of horse and foot, assailants and assailed, Morris had great difficulty in preserving a distinct idea of what was passing, or of his own peculiar duty as connected with it. Every movement he could devise seemed to offer but a fresh prospect of confusion. Where there was neither front nor rear, centre nor flank, individual efforts could not be directed to one common end ; and in their present state the tumult effectually drowned every attempt of their gallant Colonel to make his word of command heard. It was his object apparently to draw his men into a compact body to the left of their late front, and by waving his sword and pointing in the direction of the destined position, aided by the services of one or two of his officers and men, he had partially succeeded in his endeavour, when a French dragoon, a man of great personal strength, spurred his heavy charger to the assault, and the fine animal which Colonel Denham rode, taken in flank, and unable to sustain the ponderous weight of the assailant, rolled with its master to the

earth. In an instant, Morris and his friend Carnford were at their commanding officer's side—the former in time to catch upon his fusil the blow with which the trooper would have finished the work he had begun, and the latter to beat off with the but-end of his musket, which he used like a club of terrible power, the horsemen who succeeded their gigantic comrade. The combat that ensued was of the most extraordinary nature. The wonderful energy, activity, and strength of Corporal Carnford kept his numerous enemies in check for a while ; and many a pistol was levelled with ineffectual aim at his person, as he fought more like a demon than a human creature against such fearful odds. At length a blow from his musket, which levelled one of his enemies in the dust, so shattered his weapon as to leave him for a moment defenceless ; and in that moment a trooper, spurring his horse upon him, bore him to the earth, and would have trampled him to death, but that the generous animal refused to set its foot upon his body, and passing over, left him little injured by the fall.

Morris, meanwhile, had with difficulty effected his purpose. The blow which he warded with his

fusil had been dealt with such force as to shear that weapon in two, cutting through the stiff felt of his hat to inflict a painful wound upon the head ; and disarmed as he now was, it needed but another stroke from that sword to conclude the contest, when a stray shot killed his enemy's horse, and before he could disentangle himself from the saddle, Morris had seized the upper fragment of a halberd, and was prepared to meet him on more equal terms. Aware, however, of the inferiority of his own weapon, and having but lately experienced the dreadful strength of his opponent, the young soldier fought warily, and put forth all his agility to avoid blows, which he had no means of warding, and take his enemy off his guard. This he had soon an opportunity of effecting, for encumbered by his heavy boots and accoutrements, the trooper could not keep pace with his vigorous assailant. The blood was already trickling from his side, and his strength was giving way in proportion. In a fit of despair he hurled his sword with all his force at his enemy, and failing of his aim, closed in with him by a sudden bound. Locked in one another's grasp, they now struggled with the energy of men



whose lives are balanced on the contest. The great strength and stature of the Frenchman, however, were no match for the practised skill of the young soldier, who by a dexterous exertion of force, raised the gigantic wrestler in his arms, and threw him on his back with a violence that threatened to extinguish life ; then disengaging himself from his grasp, and springing lightly to his feet, he flew to execute his former purpose, lifted Colonel Denham carefully from the earth, and bore him gently but swiftly along to a spot where his regiment were rallying and shewing front, being joined and assisted by Corporal Carnford, who was by this time disengaged from his perilous contest.

The incidents here detailed occupied the space of but a few minutes, and already the predicament of the corps being observed, a party of dragoons was despatched to their assistance. These fell upon the French with vivacity, and drove them back with much loss into the wood, from which they were shortly after expelled, together with the rest of the French force occupying that position, by the charge of General Maitland's force, under the orders of the General-in-Chief. And thus

terminated the contest at Quatre Bras, which the French, though fairly repulsed and driven back upon Frasnes from every foot of ground they at any time obtained, are fond of representing as a victory on their own part—a piece of dissimulation by no means unusual in the history of their wars, which has not only the effect of rendering their testimony on such questions at all times suspicious, but of destroying the moral spirit of their soldiery, who, so long as they can gain a victory by falsehood, will scarcely feel very solicitous for the fate of the battle, nor give themselves any extraordinary pains to deserve a distinction so cheaply purchased.

The shame of a reverse has often stimulated the energies of an army to victory ; but the soldier taught to sing *Te Deum* over a shameful reverse is beyond the reach of any such incentive. Arrogance may be expected from such an one ; but generous shame, which only the retrieval of his tarnished glory can alleviate, is quite out of the question.

Evening was now pretty far advanced, and night fell darkly over the victor and the vanquished, the wounded and the slain, but not be-

fore Morris had revisited the battle-field, and brought thence to the general hospital the body of his late antagonist.

Though sorely wounded, life had not yet departed ; and Morris offering to attend him during the night, was permitted to do so, and sat accordingly beside his bed. He continued restless and uneasy, occasionally falling into a short heavy slumber, and starting from it in pain to utter groans and exclamations that pierced his attendant to the heart. The name of Napoleon was ever on his lips. He appeared to fancy that the fame and welfare of his great commander were centred in his own individual fortune, that his success depended upon his arm, and was forfeited by his reverse. At times he mistook Morris for the idol of his worship, and poured out to him professions of loyalty, and offered him topics of hope and encouragement which he did not himself feel ; and once again recovering the light of his intellect, he gazed upon the features of Morris with mournful intensity, until the conviction, that all was not yet lost, burst upon him, and with it his faith in the genius of his Emperor : and exclaiming with rapturous enthusiasm, "Victory, victory to the

great Napoleon !” he sank back again upon his pillow ; his features relaxed into the settled languor of death, and his eye, which had gleamed with uncommon vivacity, changed its brilliance for a glassy hue. Morris looked on with intense sympathy ; but when it was evident that life had become extinct, he closed the eyes of the brave soldier, and leaning his head upon his hand, fell into a train of painful reverie, suggested by the scenes he had just witnessed.

The first and prevailing impression of his mind was horror at the profession he had chosen—a profession that had never before appeared to him in so revolting a light. Notwithstanding the eloquence with which his father had set before him the drawbacks to a soldier’s career, he felt that the most powerful of all had been omitted,—the office of executioner to fellow-creatures against whom he bears no enmity, and who are gifted with the same nature, hopes, sympathies, sorrows—the same relations in the scale of being as himself. However habit might reconcile to the noisy publicity of a barrack, or inure him to the hardships of a life spent beneath the inclemencies of the heavens, and in the midst of privations and

sufferings sufficiently trying to the courage, he felt that it must require something more powerful to conquer the rebellion of his nature against so dreadful an office as that which he had just executed ; that it would call for all the exercise of enlightened reason, and all the aid of sound judgment—the conviction, firm as truth itself, that so fearful an office was essential to the peace of society, the stability of kingdoms, the welfare of the millions who prefer order to confusion. He had frequently contemplated war without any such misgiving—had viewed it from afar, through the false haze with which poetry and even history love to invest it—and had thought calmly of the thousands and tens of thousands strewn upon the battle-field, without any of his feelings rising into rebellion ; but now that an opportunity was afforded of viewing an individual victim in his expiring moments, the delusion vanished like a cloud, and the full turpitude and horror of war stared him in the face with something more than a due appreciation of his own share in the disgraceful evil. Long and bitter were his thoughts, and revolting was the idea of prosecuting a career that seemed so fraught with bitterness to himself and misery to the human

race. How long they might have continued it is impossible to say, for the wound in his head, which he had neglected and almost forgotten amidst the stirring and painful incidents of the last few hours, now commenced bleeding afresh unperceived by him ; and when next his consciousness returned, a night had glided imperceptibly away, and part of the 17th of June, and he found his limbs languid and his head bandaged ; but rest had restored him in spirits, and he determined to lie in hospital only so long as the armies should continue inactive.

Early that morning, the English General had retired with his army from Quatre Bras to Waterloo ; for, finding that the former position no longer afforded communication with the Prussian right, their force having been compelled to retreat, it ceased to be an object to preserve Quatre Bras ; but, on the contrary, a more retired position was preferable, as better affording the Prussians an opportunity to unite with the British army. For this purpose the undulating plains of Waterloo were peculiarly favourable ; for, although at the outset affording our army no decided advantage over the French, it was free

from any defects of a contrary character, well calculated from its sloping nature for a force acting on the defensive, and covered in rear by the forest of Soignies, which would have favoured our retreat in case of a reverse, by breaking and separating the masses of a pursuing enemy, and limiting their vengeance to a scattered and ineffectual pursuit. It also preserved open the road to Brussels, and probable communication with Blücher.

The serenity of the summer sky had long since vanished, and cloud following cloud had overcast the day; ere long those vapours were condensed into flooding rains, that drenched the tentless soldier to the skin, and converted the arid surface of the soil into a wide mass of soft adhesive clay. The situation of men under arms, exposed thus to the fury of elements with the prospect of riddance from such an evil only to encounter wounds and death on the battle-field, is not easily understood by those who have never experienced it, and is altogether beyond the reach of description. Occupying the position in which their great captain intended to welcome his rival in arms on the morrow, few could boast the shelter even of a

leafy bough against the torrent that poured unpitying from above, and to not a few death came that night in a form scarce milder than the rage of kindred enmity.

It was indeed a fearful night. The seasons appeared to be reversed, and nature to lift her voice against the impending massacre, which was to finish for a time the destiny of an empire, and give a victory of mourning to the power that had striven against an armed world, in defence of liberty and peace.

Morris lay wrapped in his cloak beneath a spreading tree, having refused to occupy at the expense of comrades, more severely wounded, the accommodation offered him in the field hospital. Beside him lay his friend Carnford, who had nursed him with a brother's care, and not far removed, beneath a huge basket which he had ferretted out of a farm-house, and over which he had stretched his cloak, with chin resting on his knees, and a countenance of most philosophic indifference, sat Serjeant Dryford; now dozing between the intervals of the thunder peals, and anon opening his cold grey eyes, and clearing a windpipe that was an unfailing source



of amusement to its possessor, in peace and in danger, in sunshine and in storm. From time to time, a brief remark was exchanged between the three; and once the good nature of the serjeant got the better of the selfishness acquired in many a hard campaign, so far as to offer Morris the shelter of his wicker tent, adding,—

“I know, young gentleman, that you’ve been used to warm—ahem—quarters. Now I’ve had many a more glorious rousing than this here; and I must say, I do love to hear the old clouds cracking their sides and bellowing like town bulls before we set to.”

Morris declined in his best manner the proffered kindness, and expressed his surprise, that any one should like being drowned previous to the operation of being shot or carbonadoed.

“Ah! it’s like enough you may wonder, young man, seeing you’re but a green-horn yet. And you can’t see,—how should you?—that the thunder’s the best friend of the English. Its rattle’s as good as the cry of victory when Wellington’s in the field. I knew how it ’ud be yesterday, and said so; but you all thought proper to laugh at me for my pains.”

"But *how* did you conjecture we should have such dreadful weather, when the sky was so fair?"

"Dreadful weather, indeed! I like that. Who calls this dreadful weather? It's just the right sort of thing. We've hit it to a T; could'nt have had finer if we'd whistled for it. Do hark to that rousing peal, it does one's heart good; and see the lightning—how it flashes! If I didn't feel it bristling up my hair like a porcupig! Nothing like lightning, take my word for it, except the thunder and rain. When once you hear them, you may turn on t'other side, and go to sleep all snug, and take no care of what's coming next."

"You've about the queerest fancy I ever knew for a wet jacket and a stroke of thunder,—things for which I feel no special vocation, I must confess; but you haven't told us," added the corporal, "how you guessed we should get such a cursed ducking."

"A cursed ducking do you call it? Now, do hear that! why, man alive, I'm as dry as a bone."

"That *may* be; but I'm as wet as a sponge."

"All the consequences of too much larning, as

I told you long ago, Corporal Carnford. I never knew any good come of that yet, except to the Dominic, perhaps, and the Pottercarry. It wasn't singular nominative *hic*, *hæc*, *hoc*, I take it, that shewed me the service of this here basket. *Hic*, *hæc*, *hoc*, makes a shocking bad umbrella of a rainy day, and wouldn't have taught me the use of these four bricks here, two for my kunker, and the other two to stick my feet atop of." And so pleased was the good serjeant with this display of the erudition he affected to despise, that the bounds of his benevolence immediately enlarged, and he added, "but come now, Corporal Carnford, I shouldn't wonder if we'd find room for you here beside me, if you can do without the brick; and we'll be both the warmer for sitting a little close. Always look out for a fat messmate in a rough campaign, is my maxim. There was baby Chinn, now, poor fellow! him that was bursted by a thirteen inch shell falling into him at the battle of San Sebastian—six feet six he was in length, and seven feet round the waist. He and I were particular good friends. I always spared him a little of my snacks just to keep him in flesh and fat, and he, like a good fellow, suffered me to sleep on

the lee side next him ; for there were six of us—all fed him up, to make him nice and warm. I wouldn't have changed old fatty Chinn for a kitchen fire. He warmed the ground right and left of him, a matter of six feet, and dried up the puddles like a red hot comet. He was particular warm when he was asleep, and the men of the company came to spread their hands over him the first thing in the morning, like you would over a watch-fire. I'd like to have him here now, poor baby Chinn ! It was as good as the loss of two Welsh blankets to me when he was bursted, poor fellow ! I hate losing a warm friend, and such as him are right scarce in these hard times."

"But what has all this to do with your prediction of a storm?" said Morris, who, in spite of the weather, and the pain of his wound, was curious as to the source of his information.

"Why, not much to be sure. The way I found that out was this : You see, I was sitting under an apple tree at — Cart Briar, I think they called it, when we were picqueted there. When who should come up but himself, God bless him ! riding a horse all covered with foam, and a nostril all blood-like, and a long tail, and legs so fine, my

eyes ! if it wasn't more like a deer and a lion joined together than a horse. He checked his beautiful beast on the rising ground, and looked round the country so quick and so keen ; thinks I, there's not the fellow to that eye in all Christendom—it sees everything—it does. I'd bet now he knew how many hares is squatted in the next five miles round, and how many Frenchmen's coming all invisible—the greasy dogs—from Paris. So after he'd looked all round him once, he fixed his eye on a little cloud not bigger than a lady's handkerchief, that was rising so slow, you couldn't see it move up over the hill, and I saw a something come over his face in a moment. Oh ho ! says I ; ah, ha ! putting my hand along my nose, it's all right, I see. We'll lick'em like a sack, your honour, and I'll take special care to have summut better than a thunder cloud to wrap me round the night afore we set to. So while one snatched at a cheese, and another a loaf of bread, I just whipped up this big basket, and clapped four bricks in it in a jiffy ; and I'd be proud to know whether any of them chaps, as laughed at me then, aren't in the wrong box now."

In this way the night passed, wearily enough

to all, but the few old campaigners who had studied that of which Englishmen know most, and English soldiers boast, of all mankind, to wit, comfort. It was a stern seasoning to young soldiers, and Morris, wounded as he was, could not help feeling, that the perils of conflict require a far less degree of courage for their encounter with an unsinking heart, than many of those trials of passive fortitude for which the soldier receives neither credit nor reward. But, indeed, courage is the quality of all others, most falsely estimated by the bulk of mankind. Strength of nerve, want of imagination, enthusiasm, pride, vanity, and fear itself, each and all in turn, are known to give that impulse to the mind which is mistaken for courage, and bears away the palm from a virtue so unassuming and unpretending. Nevertheless, courage is not one of these, nor has much in common with them. It is a calm, dispassionate, and deliberate principle, that, swayed by reason in its exercise, and having the fullest sense of the possible extent of danger or suffering, measures its strength against either or both, nor shrinks from putting forth its energies even when a reverse is inevitable—being no less

patient to endure, than bold to encounter and defy.

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The dawn of the 18th of June broke hazily in the east, cheerless and gloomy as a heavy sky and deluged soil could make it. The birds, scared from their accustomed haunts, had no song of gladness wherewith to welcome it; and the breeze of the morning, clammy and saturated with the night's rain, but increased the chill of the storm-beaten soldier, as it whistled through his drenched apparel. Morris rose from his miry couch unrefreshed, and right glad to exchange the cramped posture he had so long held for the free motion of his numbed limbs. He felt nerveless and ill, and would have been glad of the retirement allowed the sick, had not the moment teemed with excitement.

Around him all was life. The corn-fields swarmed with moving creatures, who had slept or lain amidst their drenched and trampled crops, and who were now rising from their sleepless bed in every posture and position, and striving to restore the circulation of the blood in their chilled and livid limbs. The various appliances resorted

to for shelter were also conspicuous as marking the bivouac of the old campaigner, and the different degrees of ingenuity displayed in the several specimens would have formed a curious speculation to the cool observer. The most effectual appeared to be small conical huts formed of sheaves of corn set upon end, and leaning towards a common centre—the earth being thrown up around them within to the height of several inches. So effectual is this contrivance, and so easy of application, that a soldier should never be in want of shelter in a corn-field when allowed to make free with the crop. Morris afterwards found that these had been chiefly constructed by men who had served in the East Indies, where such contrivances are common.

Other groups were in the act of preparing their food, or endeavouring to reconcile two very discordant elements, fire and water—the latter of which pervaded every substance they could lay hands on. Here a drummer, in his peculiar uniform, was stretching anew the vellum of his instrument ; and there half a dozen privates, with stiff, brittle fingers, and red watery noses, were poking over their firelocks, and preparing them



for immediate service ; and a little farther on an old hand was leaning comfortably with his back against the stem of a tree, well wrapped in his cloak, looking none the worse for wear, with pipe in mouth, and hat cocked, as none but an old hand can cock it, knowingly on his head, puffing the delicious fumes, and holding forth alternately to a group of admiring youngsters, who, covered from head to heels with mud, and pinched in every feature with the chill of their last night's exposure, were full of respect for the trim appearance of the narrator,—full of love of his pipe, and full of awe at the wondrous catastrophes and miraculous adventures of his past life,—and full of a certain tickling along the back-bone as they wondered what kind of a thing a pitched battle felt like, and whether they had courage equal to its demands—a shrewd speculation which has puzzled many a raw soldier.

Each regiment had occupied, during the night, the ground allotted it in the battle-field ; and, although at the present moment presenting but little of the order of disciplined battalions, the practised eye perceived at a glance how the well-adjusted elements of each could, at a moment's

notice, unite to form a phalanx impenetrable to cavalry, and irresistible in the firm unanimity of its outset. They were now scattered in the most picturesque groups along the curved ridge of Mont St. Jean—the front line occupying its summit, the second retired behind its brow. Their piled arms marked out their distinct positions ; and the horses of the cavalry, picqueted in rear, some alone, some beside their riders, shaking the heavy rain from their drenched coats, formed a striking feature in a scene of the most absorbing interest.

On the opposite heights of La Belle Alliance the French forces were gradually forming in position as they arrived. Distance concealed the effect of the late storm upon their outward display ; and distinguishing as the English could each corps of that army as it passed along the heights, many an encomium was lavished upon their gallant bearing by those who were so soon to prove their prowess in fight. Seventy-five thousand of the choicest troops of France, under the eye and soul of the most successful and brilliant General of that age, were marshalling their ranks for a final contest with ancient and hereditary foes, on the very plain where, scarce a

century before, they had beheld the pride of a tyrant humbled, and the genius of those foes triumphant; for the ground on which liberty was eventually restored to Europe had shaken under the irresistible charge of Marlborough, and echoed to the acclamations of the English and the shouts of Ramillies.

The scene under a clear sky would have been as beautiful as it was luxuriant. The richest crops of Flanders covered the undulating plain,—trampled indeed already, and full soon to be fertilized with the best blood of Europe, and encumbered with heaps of the slain. In the midst of this the ranks of battle were arrayed, and beyond the French position, on still higher ground, waved many a dark grove of noble trees that seemed to look down from their solemn repose upon the emmet hordes preparing for the fight. In the immediate foreground, diversifying the slope, stood the roofs and farms of Hougoumont and La Haye Sainte; and if the eye could for a moment retire from scrutiny of the mustering foe, to gaze backward upon the plains in rear, the thick forest of Soignies gloomed for many a mile in the distance, relieving by its dark masses the

moving figures of the foreground. But the heights of La Belle Alliance commanded the attention and interest of all. Every hour brought fresh reinforcements to that ridge, and developed the intended posture of the whole, until at about ten o'clock the heights were crested from Planchenoit on their right, to Mont Plaisir on their left, with the bayonets of innumerable corps of the line, the darker clouds of cavalry, and the engines of an artillery sufficient for the conquest of the world.

Morris, meanwhile, had snatched a hasty repast, which was enlivened by the unusually high spirits of his friend Carnford, and not a little eked out by the selfish good nature of Serjeant Dryford. Notwithstanding his wise preference of the basket and bricks which had stood him in good stead the night before, this latter worthy had contrived to lay a tenacious grasp upon certain supplementary articles of a more savoury character, which, with his usual caution, he had omitted to mention the night before. He now produced, from a snug berth in his wallet, a piece of prime bacon and a few fresh-laid eggs, which, together with the commissariat rations, formed, as he said, a very sensible foundation for drubbing those slop-suck-

ing Mounseers over the way. It is highly probable that the good serjeant had originally intended to enjoy alone the fruits of his provident skill ; yet with that good nature which frequently forms so apparently inconsistent an ingredient in a selfish character, he concluded a variety of manœuvres for securing to himself the lion's share, by pressing the good cheer so heartily on his friends as to leave little enough for himself. The meal was not the less cheerful that it was snatched between the sufferings of a night of exposure to the tempest, and a conflict that promised, from the tried valour of the troops and genius of their commanders, to be one of the sternest and most bloody in the record of man ; and even Morris, faint and worn as he was, and intensely occupied with the interest of the gathering events, could not forbear an occasional elation of spirit—the reaction, perhaps, of so many hours of hardship and gloom.

Having concluded this hasty meal, he seated himself upon a tuft of turf, and was musing on late events, and anticipating with alternate confidence and doubt those to come. Firmly he resolved to be all eye, ear, soul, to the scene in which he was to engage, and to let no opportunity

slip of confirming the favourable impressions his conduct had already made. A quick step passed behind him, but he was too absorbed to look up, or to rise until Colonel Denham stood before him. He was very pale, and his left arm hung in a sling. He smiled as he recognised Morris, and Morris could not help feeling how much the smile or frown of such an officer has power to effect among his men.

"Young man," he said, "you have commenced your career in good earnest. Your conduct has not passed unnoted, nor shall it, I trust, go unrewarded. This at least is insured you,—and for what would you exchange it?—the approval of your own heart and grateful blessing of your honourable father. But, James Morris, although I am indebted to you for my life, and shall not be slow to express my gratitude, I must counsel you for the time to come, to think less of the fate of an individual than the welfare of the whole. Soldiers must be content to share alike in the casualties of battle; and such ready self-possession as yours must not be wasted upon an old man who looks to the battle-field for his last rest, when it might be so essentially applied to rally

the dispersed and direct the rallied. I have been directed to select a serjeant upon whom I can depend to head a small party of picked men to assist in the defence of Hougoumont, that old mansion yonder. I need not say, I thought of you ;—but you look pale, my young friend, and your head is bound up. I fear you too have been wounded."

"A mere scratch, Sir."

"No such thing, Serjeant Morris, a scratch would not have made you pale, and danger never did. I must provide for you in some other way."

Morris protested so earnestly against this measure, that Colonel Denham consented to his wishes, with the proviso, that another should assist him in his duties. Morris mentioned Carnford, and gave a rapid sketch of his gallantry and high capacity. The friends accordingly were appointed, and proceeded to place themselves under the orders of the officers commanding the fort, who planted the little body of marksmen along the garden wall, with orders to defend it to the last extremity.

It was about half an hour before noon when the French artillery opened their fire. Morris gazing earnestly in the direction of the hostile heights,

was witness to its first effects. And he who has beheld even thirty or forty pieces of artillery vomiting forth fire and smoke, may have some faint idea of the scene, if he bear in mind that the French artillery numbered upwards of 300 guns, whose shot rent the air with a sound more deafening and startling to those whose heads they passed over, than the roar of the explosion itself. Under cover of this fire, and in the hope of profiting by its terrible effects upon the British line, a strong column of infantry bore down upon Hougomont, and, notwithstanding the well-directed and destructive fire of our guns, and the volleys from the garrison of the little stronghold, the corps which held the wood gave way before the desperate impetus of the attack, and were driven from their possession at the bayonet's point, and the whole weight of the assault now fell upon the mansion and its garden wall. On either side the efforts were strenuous beyond measure; for so long as we held this important post, we had ever a rallying point in advance of our own position, and flanking that of our attacking enemy. The fire of the defendants was unerring and deadly; that of the assailants was too vague to be equally



effectual—the loop-holes enabling the garrison to take deliberate aim without exposure, while the volleys of the French rattled in heavy showers among the walls and rafters with comparatively little effect.

The tide of the assailants, like the waves of ocean, rolled restlessly around the walls, and beat heavily against their fabric. The muskets were brought into such close contact, that their fire blackened and scorched wherever their balls took effect.

Soldiers clambering on their comrades' backs attempted on every side to win a footing on the defences—clinging to the summit of the wall or to the loop-holes, until stabbed or dashed with violence to the earth. Men met and fought where human foot was never intended to come, and used weapons seldom employed in civilized warfare. Corporal Carnford, in particular, whose great muscular strength disdained the instruments of slaughter of ordinary mortals, had armed himself with a heavy axe, which he wielded in his right hand as easily as if it had been a riding rod, beating down with it every opponent. Nothing could stand the terrible edge of this gigantic weapon—muskets

and sabres were divided like reeds before the blade of the reaper ; and such awe did its effects inspire, that men who cheerfully exposed themselves to the fire of muskets and cannon, shrunk from the encounter of a being almost superhuman in the power of his body and the violence of his passion, wielding a weapon they had never been used to see employed in hostile encounters. Indeed, it was observed of this man Carnford, that his passions appeared to be inflamed in proportion as his physical energies were called forth, and that where other men fought from honour, duty, patriotism, or love of fame, he seemed to be engaged in a personal quarrel of the most deadly and inveterate kind. His features at those moments inflated, the veins swollen, and the eyes glaring from the depth of their sockets, he gave the spectator the idea of some spirit of violence and bloodshed—the god of battles of the Scandinavian creed, or one of the demon monsters of the ancient Persian. Implacable and unsparing, he seemed to revel in the joy of slaughter ; and the officer in charge of that post was afterwards heard to declare, that he had counted twelve victims to his single arm in that day's contest. It may appear fantastic to

speaking of mercy in a *mêlée* of such desperate character ; nevertheless there are frequent opportunities, even in the closest struggle, for the exercise of the gentler feelings of the heart,—of disabling merely where the life of the foe is at our mercy, and of checking the uplifted arm from him whom the shot or steel has already maimed. “Stay,” said Morris, laying his hand on Carnford’s shoulder, as he was in the act to strike ; “that poor fellow’s arm is shattered, although he’s too proud to fall back.” The axe was already descending—no shade of pity checked its deadly violence. The noble victim fell, cleft downward to the chest. Morris uttered an exclamation of horror ; Carnford turned abruptly upon him, his eye glaring, and a savage triumph distending his nostril. He seemed about to wreak upon the unwelcome intruder the fury that still inflamed his heart, and it required all Morris’s self-control and remembrance of past kindness, to prevent *him* from turning his blade upon the vengeful being against whom his indignation boiled. They stood a moment eyeing one another with a glance most changed from its late friendly character. Their souls stood forth without disguise, and it was evident to each, that they were

incongruous as light and darkness. That moment anticipated to either the experience of many years.

That moment, also, brief as it was, had nearly sufficed to give their stronghold to the enemy ; for ere they could turn to resume their vigilance, half a dozen grenadiers, clambering simultaneously on the shoulders of their comrades, had attained the summit of the wall, and while two stood to their arms, one on either flank to protect the footing they had won, the other four gave their hands to those below, who swarmed to the spot and threatened to follow, with the resistless impetus of numbers, the tide that already found an entrance. It was a moment of most fearful interest and importance. They both felt it to be so, and sprang with eager emulation to the spot. The enemy saw their approach, and levelled their muskets at them. One ball passed through Carnford's hat, without however wounding him ; the other, with more fatal precision, lodged in Morris's left shoulder. Still, however, his ardour and the emergency of the case supported him, and in another moment the axe of Carnford and the sword of James Morris had brought three of the assailants down. "Spare them," cried Morris, as he saw the soldiers, who

had run to his assistance, about to sacrifice them in the fury of the moment; "they are prisoners, and we are Britons."

Still, the tide once set in motion, was not easily checked. Fast as the leaders were swept from their high position, fresh reinforcements hastened to supply their place, when a shout was heard from the garrison of the mansion itself of, "The Guards, the Guards! On them, my jolly boys; and old England for ever!" and the rush of many tramping feet was heard without, and the hurra which has so often anticipated the bayonet's thrust in turning the squadrons of France; and the tide ceased to pour in just as a film of darkness came over Morris's eyes, and he sank faint and exhausted at the foot of the wall he had so well defended.

"Who is that gallant fellow with the bound-up head?" said Captain Stratton, as he coolly issued his orders from the defence of his position. "I've had my eye upon him all the morning, and should like to know something about him. That terrible ruffian with the axe has made slaughter, but I doubt if he's done us more good than the other, whose eye seems to be everywhere at once, and his sword only where it can't be dispensed with. I

love his humanity more than his bravery and conduct. We're all ready enough to set to in Old England, but it is a hard thing to keep clear (when the devil's once roused) of making a cut here and a thrust there, which we're sorry of all the rest of our lives—at least I've found it so. Run down, Timms, and have him carried carefully in a cloak to the rear. I wouldn't anything should happen to him for a Major's commission. And, d'ye hear, let me know his name, and all you can learn about him."

Morris was accordingly carried from Hougoumont, contrary to his anxious wish, back to the centre of the line; but when his kind-hearted guide would have borne him to the rear of the second line, behind the brow of the heights, he resolutely resisted, saying, that he would take his fortune with his comrades. He was therefore deposited on the summit of the hill. But, though the spot commanded a complete view of the battle, he was too weak to profit by this advantage, and lying helplessly on his back, was not a little glad to see the honest countenance of Serjeant Dryford, and hear his husky throat clearing its gamut, as he walked with consequential swagger up.

Just as he reached the spot where Morris lay, a musket-ball took him in the heel, and brought him to an anchor on his seat with his right leg in his lap.

"Now, hang it," said the serjeant, writhing with pain, "I never was hit in the heel afore. I've been pommelled about the head like an anvil, and stuck in the side, and slashed across the shoulders, and shot through the calf, and singed, I won't say where, with a brute of a red-hot carcass. And I've had the matter of a kettleful of boiling water down my back—the same was at *San Sebarstian*. And I've been stuck all over with hot pitch like a tarpaulin; and once I was blown up by a little mine, and tossed through a sky-light upon a Spanish chap's dinner-table, all amongst the knives, and forks, and dishes; but it never fell to my lot afore to be hit in the heel—a murrain to it! And me wanted in this great battle where we're like enough to have rare fighting for our money!" And the poor serjeant lost all sense of bodily anguish in the feeling of disappointment that troubled his stout heart. "If it had been any where but in the heel," he kept exclaiming; "but I never was hit in the heel

afore, and always had the good luck to be wounded just as things was going on gloriously, and I could be dispensed with ; but *now*, what *will* the General say ? such a hop o' my thumb wound, too, in the heel, forsooth, and by a beastly little bullet !”

Morris tried to console him, and begged him, as the evil could not be helped, to tell him how things were going on below.

“That I will,” said the serjeant, “as soon as this smoke clears a little—our boys blaze so abominably. They’ve no consideration in the world for us, who might just as well be out of the battle altogether, for all we’re like to see. Ah ! now there’s a little opening. They’re hard at work on our left. French and English all mingled together, blazing away like fury,—such a fire of artillery I never saw. I think old Boney’s got the thunder under his sleeves by the rattle he’s making to-day,—it beats *San Sebarstian* out and out. But the French are giving,—there, you see, on their right, they shake and waver. It’s like they’ve got some of our boys upon their flank. We learned how to compass that go in Spain. See, they turn and scamper ; and the cavalry have got scent of them, and are pouring down after



them like fun. But there's some great one down—I know it by the crowd, and the sheepish way the lads are hanging their arms. Heaven help us!—But no; I see him there all safe and sound, though the bullets are ringing round him like hail, and the big shot ploughing the ground about him, ready for the crop of dead bodies it's like enough to have. But there's such a smoke always blowing about—it's like playing blind-man's buff."

I cannot give more of the worthy serjeant's remarks than suffice to sketch out the principal events. Long intervals frequently took place, and the movements occupied more time than is needful to narrate them.

"Are the English making no attack?" inquired Morris. "None at all; but they repulse bravely all that are made. The Moutseers haven't any of our posts yet—how should they? But see what a lump of horse and foot is bearing down on Hay Saint; (why call it hay, when there's nothing but corn for a mile round?) Those Germans are brave fellows, as I've good reason to know; but they must look sharp now, or it's all over with them. Boney must have the little farm, he

thinks, and he's like enough to get it; for the boys don't blaze away half so sharp as I've known them, and the French are fighting like mad. Well, I've seen Marmont, and that foxy old fellow Soult, and Massena, and a lot of others, all reckoned prime hands at this work; but Boney beats 'em all, I *will* say, and would beat everybody but our great Captain—long life to him! But what are the Germans about? Sure they haven't let the Mounseers in? What *can* they be about? what are we all about? Up, Serjeant Morris, and lend a hand before it's too late. But no; it *is* too late! The French are in, and the Germans are not out. So the Germans, poor fellows! must be all flummudged. Well, better that than run with the tail atween the legs, any day."

"But," said Morris, "what is all that shaking of the ground? It's like the distant rumble of an earthquake!"

"Get up, man! get up; now or never, and see with your own eyes. The Life-guards are charging right down upon the Cuirassiers, and the Cuirassiers are spurring upon the Life-guards. And the shock! Bless your heart! I wouldn't be atween

'em for a little. Do see how they struggle and strike ! And the blades ring upon those iron-shells like the music of a brazier's shop, and the horses are like wild."

" But the English seem to get the better," said Morris, who had raised himself painfully on his elbow.

" To be sure, to be sure they do. When didn't they ? The Froggies are brave fellows enough, I don't deny it ; but when they cross swords with English yeomen, it's easy enough to see what'll happen. The better ! Bless your limbs ! they beat down everything before them. Those men and those horses wasn't made of gingerbread at Greenwich fair. See, see ! how they plunge through the battle, like whales playing in the waves of the ocean ; and wherever they prance and bound along, you may see the French horses running masterless, and the French line broken to shivers. Oh, Mr. Morris, when I see them fiery fellows sitting on their brave horses like a rock, and seeming to fly like winged things through the air, I sometimes think I'd almost part with ' Brown Bess ' to cut my capers as a Guardsman."

" But what think you of the fight ? how goes

it on either side ? This terrible cannonade, which outdoes my wildest notions of the thunder of battle, must have produced some decisive effect. How is our line ?”

“ All whole, but dreadfully mauled. There never was such a storm of bullets, and many a brave fellow has been swept away. And nothing but British stuff could stand it a moment ! To be sure we’ve paid ’em back some of their long bowls, and them shapners knocks out their teeth like winkie, and puzzles ’em like blazes ; but then it’s one thing to be touched up here and there as you rush on to fight, and clean another to stand still picking your teeth and pocketing the affront. The French have got Hay Saint, and have drawn up a strong force there. And our first line is so thinned, that unless they’re true steel every inch of ’em, (which they are,) they cannot stand this work for ever. I wish we’d hear something of the Prussians. It’s time enough we should, and the sun so low. If our second line was like the first, we shouldn’t want them ; but they’re not English—that’s the mischief ; and anything else would be beat in a minute by these heavy attacks.—But, hark ! didn’t you hear the distant boom of a gun

on the left? There, there, I'm sure it was—them's the Prussians—if they can only be up before Boney gets away in the dark."

"And the General, how looks he?"

"Cool as a lion. He knows what he's about. I saw him just now close by, giving orders like he would at a review, only quicker; and now here, now there—wherever the French make any head. We're fools to fuss while he's afoot. He's got some grand plan in his pocket, which he'll bring out presently pop upon the enemy. He's strengthened our centre now. It's all charge, charge, charge! Those French are brave fellows at a charge. In my opinion, we should never let them get any velocity in their heels; but on them at once with the bayonet. And every time they charge we form squares, as should be, and beat 'em back."

"And our guns?"

"Are atween the squares. So when the French come bounce upon 'em, the gunners pop into the square, and Mounseer finds the gun sure enough; but it is not like a pocket pistol, to be snapped up and away, seeing the horses is in the rear. So when the bullets sends Mounseer back, out pops

Jack artilleryman, and blazes upon his hind quarters in style."

"Strange that we stand so much on the defensive! What is Napoleon about?"

"I think it's him mustering up that heavy body of troops in their rear. He's going to make a desperate charge. Look to it, boys; for if he leads, the Guards will fight to the last drop. They love him so, the brave fellows! The mass is moving on steadily. It is like a terrible thundercloud, all black and gloomy, and rolling so majestic! And see! Wellington's got our line in order to meet them. He leads them himself, his honour! and I here with a split heel sitting on my hunker like a tailor. Look, look, Serjeant Morris; for now is the last tug of the day!"

Morris *did* look. He beheld the dense columns of France advancing like an overwhelming flood led by their unconquered hero. He thought of the shattered condition of our line, and felt the peril of that moment. Again he saw that their Emperor had left them, and turned to where the genius of the British army was cheering his hardy little band, and heading them to the onset, and

his heart revived within him. A fire most deadly in its effects opened upon the approaching columns: they bore it with a heroism worthy of a better fate. But why attempt to deploy, when their only chance is to break their onward way by weight of concentrated numbers? The thing is impossible. They reel, they stagger, hemmed in, in a defenceless posture on every side. They are broken, confused, confounded. Never before had an enemy seen the backs of that gallant guard; and now they are as a flock of panic-stricken sheep, whose only hope is in flight!

It was at that moment, while the Prussian force poured down from the heights on the left, that the order to advance was hailed with rapture, by men who had so long and patiently endured the most terrific fire ever poured upon a devoted army, in the hope to hear that cheerful mandate run along their line. At once the whole British force was in motion, sweeping onward like the scythe of death. And the loud hurra rung from the many thousand voices, as they levelled their bayonets with one accord, and the tramp of their firm accordant step over the field covered with the dead and dying, the arms of men, and the

ensigns of battle, shook the plain, and rose above the din of fight—a spirit-stirring sound to a Briton, but the knell of destruction to the scattered legions of France.

“This is too much !” exclaimed Morris, starting to his feet ; “I can bear it no longer.”

“Nor I neither,” replied Serjeant Dryford ; and commenced a series of vigorous hops, which would have been highly becoming in a lame magpie. The strength of neither, however, was equal to their zeal, and stumbling upon the slippery plain, they were very shortly at their journey’s end.

Night was now fast closing round, and the English, giving up the pursuit to their allies, halted upon the heights of La Belle Alliance, the late position of their foes. A victory so complete, won at such a deadly cost, and by such desperate valour, filled the survivors with the most opposite vicissitudes of rapturous and mournful thoughts ; and when the shadows of night were drawn around them, and closing out the material world, brought their spirits as it were into immediate converse with that which is unseen, we believe there were few so destitute



of natural religion as to withhold the tribute of fervid, heart-felt gratitude, to the Goodness which had led them through so many dangers unscathed, and made them the instruments of freedom to so great a bulk of mankind.

## CHAPTER X.

## THE MAJOR AGAIN IN INDIA.

THE MARQUIS OF HASTINGS—THE PINDAREE WAR—  
THE MUD FORT.

[THE regiment to which Lieutenant Worthington was attached did not form part of the army of occupation under the Duke of Wellington ; and even had it been selected, it is doubtful whether his active spirit would have suffered him to continue a member of a force whose whole pursuit was pleasure. Returning to England, he devoted a small portion of his time to his friends ; and hearing that the Marquis of Hastings, the Governor-General of India, had his hands full with the Nepaulese, the Pindarees, and the people of the Deccan, he determined upon returning to active service in Hindostan. By the spring of 1816, he was again in his old haunts ; and from the various memoranda he has bequeathed, it was evident

his time was divided between field sports and field service for the eight or ten years which followed.]

ALTHOUGH I had seen enough of the valueless character of letters of recommendation to great men to make me indifferent to the many offers of introductions which proceeded from different friends when the time arrived for my return to India, I could not resist accepting one letter to the Marquis of Hastings, the Governor-General of India. For, putting aside the fact of the writer being a man of exalted rank, who had a heavy claim on the Marquis's attention, I did not like to relinquish the chance, however remote, of being employed upon the staff, or in some non-descript office, which would place me in service against the Pindarces, with whom the Marquis was, it was said, about to wage war.

The result justified my prudence. The moment I arrived in India I despatched the letter to the "Most Noble," and was immediately ordered to join his head-quarters to act as an extra aid-de-camp—albeit the staff already exceeded the regulated number. Nothing could be more congenial to my feelings. The Marquis was one of those

men whom to know was to love. 'Bred in courts—a companion and a *suffering* friend of the Prince of Wales—impressed, too, with an idea that the respect of the natives of India was only to be won by an assumption of almost regal grandeur—the Marquis nevertheless blended with the pomp of Oriental existence a remarkable amount of *bonhomie*. The “state” of the Governor-General and his wife, the proud Countess of Loudon, was, at Calcutta, a grand piece of stage effect. There were pages and chamberlains, a dais for the noble pair, and a flourish of trumpets to accompany their movements from the drawing-room to the dinner-table, and *vice versa*. If any man was guilty of the solecism of asking for beer at the dinner-table, he was quietly told he would find some on the side-board; if any one was bold enough to ask the Countess to take wine, he was met and withered by a cold Scotch stare. But the frigid etiquette put aside, all was cordiality and kindness. It may be conceived that “the field” afforded the Marquis an excellent opportunity of unbending.

I found His Excellency in the camp of an immense and efficient army. The war had begun.

The Pindara against whom he was operating, was a very devil-may-care sort of a personage in practice, though wanting in that dash and romantic attribution, which render the brigand of Europe so truly and justly interesting to young ladies, and so very terrific and coolly-through-the-head-shooting to imaginative young gentlemen. The Pindara was a coarse, unsentimental ruffian, whom a slight show of opposition always caused to keep his distance ; but as his fierceness of deportment and apparent fury generally put the villagers into as great a fright as he would otherwise have been in himself, he contrived, for many years anterior to 1816, to have everything so much his own way, that he had a thorough notion of his invincibility, and the smallest *Pin* believed himself a Rustum at the lowest computation. Neither age nor sex spared he, if he thought that by so doing he would miss a single rupee, or the thinnest silver ornament ; and he would tear away ear and all to secure the multitudinous ear-rings, if there was any inconvenient struggling, or if other circumstances induced him to be in a hurry. But in the generality of cases he preferred inflicting torture

to dealing immediate death ; for, as dead men tell no tales, while tortured ones tell almost anything they are asked to tell, the Pin did not choose that the secret of the hidden treasure should be buried in the owner's grave. Wherefore, when a gentleman villager (one evidently well to do in the world) was suspected of having treasure elsewhere than about his ill-used person, he had spear points, and similar pleasant applications, put to his natural sensibility, on the principle, perhaps, of Dousterswivel's divining rod ; but the panacea was a heap of fine fresh chillies, pounded and put into a *tobra*, (horse's nose-bag,) and the same tied over the recusant's face, inasmuch that he had to inhale *that*, or go without—which latter procedure, if on the voluntary principle, was next door to suicide. In this manner did the Pindara horde—numbering from thirty to fifty thousand men—lay all India under annual contribution for a series of years ; robbing, slaying, and devastating with virtual impunity ; and even supported by the Mahratta princes of the time, who shared in the general plunder, and regularly treated with the bandit chieftains. But the Marquis of Hastings put an extinguisher on them at last, and

thousands of villages now stand in safety which formerly used to be sacked or harried when the *nullahs* (minor rivers) became fordable after the rains, with greater regularity than the border counties of Britain in the days of Scott's idolatry. The horse of the Pindara was of the ragged order to look at, but he had infinite pluck, and would go forty or fifty miles at a stretch, as a thing to which he was by no means unaccustomed. He had balls given to him, in which opium (the *aufeem* of the chant) was an ingredient, and these used to stimulate him to first-rate exertion, especially if the Company's cavalry were hanging on his rear! With these few explanations, and a few notes which shall be scattered here and there, the enlightened reader may now proceed to sing the

#### SONG OF THE PINDARA.

Come! on with the saddle, and tighten the girth,  
The time has arrived for the durrah to mount, boys!  
Spears in our hands, in our hearts hope and mirth,  
And hey for the riches we stay not to count, boys!  
Ours is the pillage  
Of traveller and village;  
Ours the gay life of adventure and freedom!  
Hoorra! Hoorra!  
Good luck to Pindaras,  
And great be the fame of the heroes who lead 'em!

The nullahs have fallen, and the rains have gone by—  
 Who but the sweets of the last raid remembers !  
 Few the Mahajuns who 'scaped our keen eye,  
 Few were the dwellings we left not in embers !  
     Vainly their stores  
     Of rupees and gold moh'rs,  
 'The shroffs and the bunyas hide deep in the ground, boys !  
     Hoorra ! Hoorra !  
     Chillies and pincers,  
 Where is there witchcraft like theirs to be found, boys !\*

Wide is our sweep ! from the plains of Berar,  
 Down to far Dacca, through Oude and Bundéla ;  
 Shrowdly we ransack serai and bazar,  
 Hawk-like we stoop on the wealth of the méla !†  
     Brief space do we wrangle  
     For ear-ring or bangle ;  
 Short work make we of a woman's resistance !  
     Hoorra ! Hoorra !  
     Before a Feringhee  
 Can come to the rescue, we're lost in the distance !

Deeply with sáree, doputta, and shawl,  
 Jewels and gold, the lootèra is laden ;‡  
 Silks and brocades—and what's better than all,  
 His is the choice of the matron or maiden !

\* The foreign parlance of this verse may be rendered as follows into our own language :—*Mahajuns* are tip-top haberdashers, and are also money-lenders. In the sack of a town, their houses, and those of the *shroffs* or bankers, have the unenviable precedence. A *bunya*, properly *bunee*, is a retailer of grain, &c., and hated by Jack Sepoy, especially on pay-day.

† A *méla* is a fair, occasioned generally by the great periodical religious assemblages of the Hindoos, at places like Hurdwar, Allahabad, &c., celebrated for their holiness, in connexion with the Ganges:

‡ The *sáree* and *doputta* are pieces of female raiment, much alike, only that the former is calculated to make an entire dress,



Zenana and haram  
 Ring forth the alarm,—  
 Vainly their riches and beauties are hoarded !  
 Hoorra ! Hoorra !  
 Quick with the damsels !  
 For hills must be clamber'd, and rivers be forded !

If the cavalry fierce come too hot on our track,  
 Have we not Dowlut Rao and stout Holkar to flee to ?  
 In our booty they share, and get many a lac,  
 From Wussil Mahommed, Kurreem, and bold Cheeto.  
 We'll have plundering and burning,  
 Before our returning ;  
 Who that resists shall escape from our slaughter !  
 Hoorra ! Hoorra !  
 Wealth from the merchant,  
 From the husband his wife, from the father his daughter !

Come, my good steed, we must up and away ;  
 There's your anscem,—see, the Durrah's decamping !  
 Panic is borne on the voice of your neigh,  
 Hope flies the heart at the sound of your tramping !  
 From our hulla-goolla,  
 Shrink Brahmin and Moollah ;  
 No safety from us is in mosque or pagoda :  
 Hoorra ! Hoorra !  
 The brave Lubbureas,\*  
 Are kings of the land from Cuttack to Baroda !

A succession of isolated fights, skirmishes, pursuits, and escapes, distinguished the service against

while the latter is merely a Brobdignagian veil. They are often extremely beautiful and costly ; and being light, compressible, and easily packed, the *Pin* had a partiality for the better sorts of them accordingly. *Lootèra* is another name for *Pindara*, and being derived from *Loot*, plunder, means a plunderer.

\* Lubburea signified in *Pindara* technology, a commander of a Lubbur, or grand division of the horde.

the Pindarees, out of which also arose a war with the Mahratta chieftains, Dowlut Rao Scindia, the Rajah of Nagpore, and the Paishwa ; for these people were driven to the alternative of upholding the freebooters, or conforming to the dictates of the British Government. Placed as I was near the person of the Marquis, few opportunities of personal distinction presented themselves ; but having had the good luck to be sent to the camp of Sir John Adams, the "Father of the Army," as the Sepoys loved to call him, I obtained leave to join a detachment which had been despatched to capture a mud fort in the valley of the Nerbudda. The event made a sufficient impression upon me to lead to a record of the operations, such as they were.

The bugle sounded the reveillé in the morning at the usual hour, as if nothing extraordinary were in agitation, and the drum-call in due time assembled the men of the detachment on parade. The extra ammunition had been served out the preceding evening, the different columns and divisions for the attack accurately told off, and little remained in the morning but for the men to fall in and await the order to advance. Two pieces of artil-

lery, with their tumbrils and full equipments, were in the front ; the European privates grouped beside them—their necks uncovered and collars thrown back—their white cotton jackets half unbuttoned, and a few of them with their trousers tucked up, and their ungaitered well-proportioned limbs forming a pretty strong contrast with the attenuated and curved supporters of the lascars and bullock-drivers. The artillerymen were in high spirits, laughing and jesting with each other, and eager for the *spree*, as they called it. Our countrymen, in all parts of the world, are seldom backward on an occasion of this kind ; and in various of the assaults to which they were led in the Peninsula, they evinced a fearlessness and reckless disregard of opposing danger, more than to match the brightest records of chivalrous devotion handed down to us from the olden ages. But in India, their bearing, under such circumstances, has frequently shewn itself in a wild, more daring, and ungovernable rushing at the worst—a passionate desire to grapple with it in utter disregard of *all* human opposition. As if our countrymen, in their contempt of the natives, and in their believing them to be less than human, wished

to exhibit themselves to the Asiatics as something more : and as "*nec Deus intersit*," in these degenerate, unpoetic days in our earthly broils and battles, they are content to enact in India, for the time being, the desperate *dramatis personæ* of devils incarnate. Walled in, and cooped together in a barrack ; checked there, and controlled at times—next petted, and coarsely pampered, their spirits and seeming strength sinking beneath the climate, while their passions and most excitable energies are the more irritated and hourly roused as their moral ones are deteriorating and decaying ; loose these poor brave fellows from their years of confinement, and set them at the work for which they were designed and are panting, if only to give them release from barrack discipline and confinement ; and at once, like the bull-dog, fairly slipped at his victim, they dash at him with an instinctive fierceness and alacrity, incredible save to those who have witnessed their almost fiend-like superhuman efforts. Much may be attributed to their always having the post of honour among their native fellow-soldiers, and to the feeling that it would be a stigma upon them to do no more than others under these

inspiring distinctions. Whatever the cause, one thing is certain, that whatever effect the climate may have on the constitution and power of the European soldier, however it leave his outward appearance emaciated and unnerved,—still there is a soul of vivacious unconquerable superiority in the white man which no exile nor sickness can quench! Like the steel of his own daring weapons, the heat of the furnace may have blackened and defaced, nay, reduced the iron mass that originally gave it; yet it hath so steeled and tempered the residue, that, though it bend beneath the blow it would inflict, it still cuts deeper and fiercer for its ordeal.

To the right was now stationed the light company; on an order from the Major who commanded, it filed off to the crest of the ravine, and extending its files, there awaited the order for further operations.

On the left was posted Captain Rust's company and Ensign Rivers, and, at the same time, with the movement of the light company, it proceeded to the huts to the westward, and occupied a position under cover of them, before a little *zenanah* wicket. The gun did not accom-

pany it, but for the present was to remain with its companion to cover it, while they were running it down to the main-gate in the front face. Captain Oldboy, with four companies, was steadily in line in front of the encampment, when the Major, observing that the two companies on the flanks had taken up their necessary positions, and hearing from the rear of the fort a bugle-call intended to apprise him, as concerted, that his Majesty of ——'s troops had arranged themselves along the western jungle, and on the river behind the rear face of the fort, he rode up to the Captain, and told him to put his men in motion. He did the same to Lieutenant Topaz with the guns. There was no attempt at speechifying ; he just pointed to the fort, and said to the artillerymen, "My lads, you'll do your duty;" and then turning round to the Sepoys, exclaimed in Hindoostanee, "Now, shew what the old *juwan-ka-pultun* is made of," (calling it by its own familiar soubriquet,) "and let us teach these Rajcoomar rascals what the Company's Sepahees can do." The order was given. By a simple evolution the late line was converted momentarily into a dense column, and at once the division,

guns and all, leaving only about one hundred and fifty men under arms to act as a reserve, and remain in the camp, marched on briskly, detouring a little to the left, to avoid the head of the ravine in front, and gain the road at once leading on to the gate. There was an evident bustle now and crowding on the southern wall of the fort—the smoke of the numerous lighted matches was slowly rising in the morning air from the crest of the parapet, and the thick masses of the garrison were plainly watching these movements in breathless anticipation, but, delaying their fire, and, as if intentionally, determined not to strike the first blow. “I hope the chaps will continue in this mind, Topaz,” said the Major to the Lieutenant with the leading gun, and by whose side he was riding, as they now got within easy matchlock reach. “If they will only be good-natured enough to allow the muzzle of your gun to touch their gate timber before they open a fire on us, I think the first bark of your little friend there will save them much trouble, by making something else open for us.”

“See, they are waving us back, Major,” said Topaz.

“Let them signalize as much as they please. It must be somewhat more,” said the Major, making a mock salaam, in reply to the numerous arms waving for him to retire, “that must send us to the right about.”

“Be ready to deploy, Captain Oldboy,” called out the Major, looking back at the advancing Sepoy column.

“We are all ready, sir.”

Still they advanced, and there was evidently much stir on the fort walls. The endeavours of some one in authority were distinctly observed keeping quiet a few of the garrison who were pointing their pieces and anxious to commence firing. At length it appeared that the more eager and fiery among them carried the day; for, in spite of prohibition, a few shots fell smartly among the leading files, and in a moment or two the whole front of the fort was peppering away in the unbroken *urrrhing* sort of sound of a well-sustained file-fire. The Major's horse was the first to feel the effect: a ball struck it on the mane, and wounded the upper part of the neck. It reared immediately, and the good old man was fain to dismount and send his charger away to the rear,



to the no small comfort and felicitation of the syce, who affected not this close quarter style of operations. They were by this time little more than sixty paces from the gate. The order was given for the Sepoys to deploy, which they did admirably, and in less than a minute they were in line in favourable positions, and blazing away in good set style, and not a little silencing the late heavy fire of the gentry on the walls. The second gun behind that of Topaz was now promptly placed in the centre of the line, and quick as lightning its flashes were darting from it, and grape, canister, and shrapnell were pouring from its mouth, to the tune of some three or four pounds of each ; while the leading six-pounder, admirably conducted by Topaz, and under cover of the fire, was fairly run into the commencement of the descent immediately leading to the gate. Here an unexpected obstacle opposed itself,—a deep ditch had been dug across the path the preceding evening, nearly five feet wide, proportionally deep, and the opposite part of it well *fraised* with pointed stakes. The fire of the fort was redoubled at the moment ; three of the Europeans were tumbled over, and the garrison shouted in exultation !

Not a moment was to be lost. The Major from the line saw the pause, and sent a company down to support the gun ; but Topaz by this time had ordered the disengagement of some spare planks from the tumbril behind, and throwing them across the ditch, soon forced the gun with their aid beyond the obstruction, and getting into the descent, speedily ran it down to the gate. While in that situation close under the wall, he was perfectly safe for the time from the efforts of the garrison. All this, however, had not occurred until four more of the artillerymen, and at least a dozen of the Lascars and covering Sepoys, had been added to the poor fellows who were stretched on the earth struggling in agony in front of the little ditch in the pathway. There were still hands enough to work the gun in its present snug situation, and bang went its smothered and suppressed report against the timbers of the entrance. From the position of the troops nothing could be seen but a mass of dense white smoke now enveloping the gateway ; loud pealed another discharge—the louder always for being confined and straitened in its operation. A third report—the grenadiers were already in columns of sub-divisions

ready to bound forward. A fourth peal from the gun, and a crash, and a loud hurra and shout from the party working it! The Sepoys dashed on, heedless of the tenfold increased angry fire of the now desperate combatants on the walls! All seemed our own; but the troops had a little yet to get over ere they could profit by the gateway being battered and burst open. The garrison had not only planted huge trunks of trees in the earth behind the planking of the gates, but had stockaded the whole in rear of the entrance, so that a new difficulty arose, and the few who crept in through the splintered opening were fain to withdraw again from the heavy fire kept up by fellows on *muchauns* along the stockading, and wait the coming up of bamboo ladders from the rear.

In the meantime the little detachment to the left had boldly left its covert of the huts, and the moment the second gun could be spared from its office of protecting and covering the first advance of the other, they had moved it to the westward and run it to the small wicket there described and applying the muzzle and plank to it, the second discharge laid open the wicket—but the wicket only, not larger than the same small, low

description of Durwan's entrance, observable in the gates of the fashionable Calcutta edifices. The gun was here under a serjeant, and the whole by this time commanded by young Rivers, for his captain had been shot through the shoulder in the advance to the wall. The men from the bastion were firing down sharply on the clustering group of assailants gathering around the wicket. Rivers placed a division to the left to keep down their fire for a few moments, while his men one by one could creep into the scanty opening made for them. An artilleryman led the way: he was knocked over the instant he entered. The serjeant followed, and was served precisely the same. A Sepoy who bent down, and went after him, bit the dust, and another and another shared the same fate. The space was cleared now between Rivers and the wicket: he had been encouraging the entrance of these gallant, almost victimized, fellows; he felt ashamed to call more forward; and while, with a stout and yet truly foreboding heart, he prepared to stoop for his own admission through this seeming certain passage to death, he called out to the Subadar near him to bring in after him the men as quickly and instantaneously as possible.

He bent down—he placed his head and foot at the same moment within the entrance—and a thick pattering of shot whizzed hail-like about him. He was untouched! He sprung in with an exulting cry and wave of his sabre; but the next instant saw him staggering and falling to the earth—a ball had passed through his thigh, and another had injured his other limb below the knee. A loud shout and fierce cries were heard at this juncture from the other part of attack. They had cleared the obstacle it was evident; and the fire immediately at hand ceased for a brief space. Men poured in at this momentary pause through the wicket; and there before them, on a raised platform or *muchaun*, directly in front of the entrance, was the cause of the late slaughter; an old man, and half-a-dozen or more of the garrison, on the platform, while others beneath were handing them loaded matchlocks. At the entrance of the Sepoys the companions of the aged combatant attempted to escape by a loose plank connecting the *muchaun* with an open window of a pukka building behind it. The assailants observed their movements, and rushing forward, soon disposed of the few below the plat-

form, and with the halberds of the havildars displaced the loose plank, which had served the fugitives for a bridge of present safety. The old man still remained on the eminence, and taking up coolly one by one the matchlocks which had been left behind, was aiming such as he found loaded with fatal precision on the Sepoys below him.

"*Mar, mar, mar!*" exclaimed the infuriated assailants.

"*Aglugou,*" cried an ancient Naick; and at once firing some straw with one of their muskets, they applied it to the combustible and frail materials forming the scaffolding on which the murderous old Killedar (for such he was) was himself tiger-like at bay, still dealing wounds and death around him. The Sepoys were, almost to a man, too hurried and excited to load their own pieces, —all were pressing forward as the fire quickly ascended the uprights of the platform, to secure and impinge their victim on their bayonets immediately his fast-failing tenement and retreat were brought to the earth. The fire curled up around the very person of the poor old devoted rebel—his white beard was singeing, in the flame; at once,

seizing a sword, he sprang downward on a small opening among his destroyers, where fewer bayonets seemed to bristle beneath him. It was from a height of fifteen feet: no wonder he lighted not upon his feet; and before he could regain them, at least half-a-dozen bayonets were pinning him fiercely to the earth. In vain he struggled or wounded those nearest to him. The Major, who entered the wicket at that fearful moment, (having silenced all opposition at the main-gate,) saw his arch-enemy here writhing beneath the steel of his many opponents. One of them was removing his bayonet for the purpose of imbedding it again more effectually in some more vital part; but the weapon was too firmly fixed—it would not quit its hold. The soldier had placed his foot against his victim, at that moment engaged with some other tormentor, to assist in forcing out the steel. The Major shrieked out to him to desist: the bleeding Ensign Rivers, too, was dragging himself forward on the earth like a wounded snake, to endeavour, if possible, to save, or rather to protect, the last moments of the Killedar; but the Sepoy had now loosened his musket by disengaging it from the bayonet, which he left buried in the

breast of the struggling wretch, and was savagely reversing his firelock to beat in the brow of his victim, when the old Major rushed forward, and with his aged yet nervous hand and sword-hilt, struck down the Sepoy to the dust. The Killedar saw the merciful act ; his eye caught, too, the approach, under a similar kindly intention, of the wounded Ensign. His sword fell from his grasp ; his eye, late glaring with the ire of a stricken tiger—his brow, late speaking but death and dark defiance, suddenly sank into the soft beseeching of gratefulness, and of betokened kindness and feeling. His hand pointed to the open lattice of the *pucka zenanah* above, and his lips faltered the faint beseeching prayer, "*buchas*," save my family. He heard the brief, "I will, I will," of his enemy, and at once an almost happy and benign smile lightened up the features of the dying man. He lifted his hand as if to *salaam* his thanks, but the hand itself sank in the motion undirected, unbidden, and lifeless, on his brow, for his spirit at that moment had parted for ever !

The Pindara campaign was brought to an end at the close of 1817. No longer did any occasion exist for extra *Aides-de-camp* ; and I joined my



regiment, awaiting any opportunity that might present itself to the Marquis (who was not always oblivious of his promises) for his conferring upon me some permanent employment.

At the termination of the Mahratta War, and the annexation of large tracts of the Deccan to the British sovereignty, it became necessary that the country should be surveyed preparatory to the allotment of the lands and the settlement of the revenue. In India, at that time, no persons were available for responsible Government employ but the civil and military officers ; and as the latter possessed among their body a considerable number of good draftsmen and linguists, the staff of surveyors was selected from them ; and I had the good fortune to be remembered by the Marquis as a tolerable hand at a reconnoissance and a sketch.

## CHAPTER XI.

## THE DECCAN—DAWK TRAVELLING—POONAH.

It is pretty well understood by this time that no country in the world offers so many temptations to the sportsman, or so great a variety of sport, as the vast territory comprehended between lat.  $5^{\circ}$  and  $35^{\circ}$  N., and long.  $70^{\circ}$  to  $90^{\circ}$  N. The sports common to all climates and territories may be found there in *degree*; and though dangers of no common kind assail those who pursue them under a tropical sun, often amidst swamps and pestiferous jungles, or on the summit of ice-clad mountains, it is rare that the health of the European suffers from an indulgence in them. The excitement and exercise neutralize the deleterious effects of miasma and Sol's piercing rays.

All men do not arrive in India ready-made sportsmen; but all men as surely become followers of the chase from accident, inclination, opportunity, and the hard necessity of doing something

to kill time in localities where the business occupations of life make but small demands upon attention. The boy who never mounted a pony before he went to India, becomes a horseman the moment he gets there ; for officers must march *à cheval* with their regiments, and pedestrian exercise is out of the question in a country destitute of meadows, pathways, and good roads. Once firm in his saddle, the equestrian seeks every opportunity of following the hounds or the grisly boar, or trying his skill in a race or a steeple chase, and in this way he gradually becomes wedded to all the allurements of the field.

I confess to having become a sportsman by very gradual steps. The opportunities which I enjoyed during my early campaigns were not very numerous, nor, indeed, could I relinquish my passion for Oriental studies for any less sedentary pursuit. But the appointment to the Deccan, involving much out of door avocation, changed my habits, and soon rendered me more than "a bit of a Nimrod."

Proceeding from Calcutta to Bombay by ship, I found orders awaiting me at the latter Presidency to join the Revenue Survey at Poonah.

To reach Poonah with all possible expedition, I travelled *dawk*. It is a delightful thing to travel dawk. I suspect that people in England know as little of the manner in which we get over the ground in that fashion as they do of other matters Asiatic. We are supposed to wander over wide and desolate plains, upon extensive elephants, attended by a gentleman in front, who drives a species of boat-hook into the animal's head, and a gentleman behind, who screens us from the piercing rays of the sun with an ample umbrella. Some folks who have very *general* ideas of Oriental life, place us on the backs of camels, and suppose us to make one of a patriarchal cavalcade, while others, of more brilliant imaginations, take it for granted that we start by the mail, "all on springs, like a *corps de ballet*," fall fast asleep at Calcutta, and wake at Delhi. Few ever heard of THE DAWK, or can conceive it possible that distances of a thousand miles are accomplished in little boxes borne on the shoulders of four sable fellow-creatures. Yet such is the common mode of transit; and to my plain thinking, it is the most agreeable and independent method of getting over ground known to the

civilized world—always excepting the luxury of your own carriage, fast post-horses, and roads as level and smooth as a bowling-green. It is true the bones ache after a long dawd trip in a manner to convey a lively idea of rheumatism. You never can sleep more than two hours at a stretch, because you are disturbed by the appeals of the relay bearers, who want *buxis* at every stage,—the oil-fed flambeaux of your torch-bearers are flashed under your very nose the whole night through,—and your ears regaled incessantly with the buzzing, humming, chanting, of your bearers ;—but still the dawd is a delightful species of carriage. We have not yet arrived at that point of civilisation when travelling can be rendered absolutely comfortable under any circumstances. Take the railroad ! You see but little on your journey, and a pebble may whisk you to eternity before you can say Jack Robinson. The mail ! You are pent up for hours with a curious, forbidding old woman, *vis-à-vis*, afflicted with an obstinate cough, and a yelping lap-dog ; on your right is an invalid attorney, who must have both windows up ; and the fourth of the *partie carrée* has impregnated his garments with cigar-smoke ; the guard allows

you but little time to bolt a few slices of indurated, time-honoured ham, and a cup of boiling hot tea ; and there is every chance of a detention, on the most desolate part of the road, from a lost linch-pin or a broken coach-pole.

Then for the travelling o' horseback, as is our wont in Persia and Asiatic-Turkey,—it is well enough for the ride, but you are exposed to all weathers, subjected to long halts, or relays of unknown brutes. A quiet camel ? Sea-sickness without the comfort of a steward and a swing-cot. A ship ?—according to Sam. Johnson, “imprisonment, with the chance of being drowned.” A boat on the Nile, the Ganges, the Euphrates ? Confinement, sand-banks, contrary winds, and *tedium vitæ*. Locomotion (barring the carriage and post-horses aforesaid) is monstrously annoying in the best form ; but as it is not given to mortals to transport themselves without auxiliary aid, and as every spot on the fair earth is worth visiting, commend me to the INDIAN DAWK. You are your own master. Your palankeen is at once your arm-chair by day and your bed by night,—your dressing-table, your kitchen, your library, are all compactly stowed before you. Your patient

bearers stop when it pleaseth you, and where it pleaseth you. Here you feast your eyes upon a magnificent landscape, in which silvery rivers rush through luxuriant jungles, and lofty mountains, covered with rich foliage, invite you to add to the wealth of your portfolio. *There* you are arrested by the picturesque remains of some antique temple,—the half-effaced inscriptions on whose mural adornments excite your curiosity and perplex your learning.

Now, you descend from your palankeen to sniff the morning air, and catch from the wild cry of the partridge, the carol of the lark, and the crow of the jungle-cock, the pleasant infection of exhilarated spirits ; and anon you are reclining on your portable couch, carried, in imagination, by an agreeable novel, to the land of the loved West, until the subdued pace of your *porteurs* apprizes you that you are reaching one of the comfortable little bungalows or asylums for travellers, where attentive domestics supply you with a bath and a breakfast, and you stretch your limbs preparatory to another stage. I have tried every description of locomotion, the 1200 ton steamer, the 1500 ton Indiaman, the Leith smack, the barque, the brig,

the buggalah, the canoe, the elephant, the camel, the horse, the mule, the donkey, the rail-train, the mail, post-coaches, post-chaises, the diligence, the omnibus, the eil-wagen, the vetturino, the gig, the kadjava (or pannier), the sledge, the—all, in short, excepting the ostrich and the balloon; and THE DAWK still stands A 1 in my register of their respective virtues and recommendations.

Poonah, for many years the capital of the Deccan, is situated in latitude  $18^{\circ} 30'$ , about ninety miles east of Bombay, and thirty from the great mountain range, the Western Ghauts. It stands on the east bank of the Moota river, which, running under its walls, and uniting itself with the Moota, about half a mile below, forms the Moota Moota, and, thence flowing into the Beemah, finally debouches near Masulipatam in the Bay of Bengal, 600 miles distant. Poonah was for years the residence of the Peishwah, the minister of the Sattarah prince. But the latter being retained in a species of confinement at Sattarah, and reduced to little more than a state pageant, the former became sovereign *de facto*, though not *de jure nec de nomine*, of that superb province, and thus was considered the chief of the Mahratta empire.



From its local position, as well as from being the centre of a splendid court, Poonah became a city of great importance and commerce. Its bazaars were superb, and the houses in the principal streets were all of puckah masonry, and from two to three stories high. The streets were wide, and some of them paved, and the palaces of the chief nobles and the Peishwah were buildings of immense size. Of these last, I believe only one now remains—a second having been taken down, and a third destroyed by fire not many years ago. Since it came into our possession, although at the time of my visit the head-quarters of the largest British force in India, and also of an extensive civil establishment, its trade has greatly diminished, and its wealth sensibly declined. Yet it is still a place of much importance, and enjoys a population of about 70,000 souls, exclusive of the adjoining camp.

The old Mahratta police, which is here retained in full vigour, is admirable. At ten P.M. the city gates are shut, and a gun fires from the ramparts. From that hour, no person, save and except the police patrols, can walk in the streets—any person, European or native, found out within the

walls after that hour, being instantly confined in the watch-house. At four in the morning another gun fires, and the gates are opened. There are, consequently, fewer robberies and night disorders in Poonah than in perhaps any other similarly large city in the world. The same system of police is retained, with more or less strictness, in most of the large towns throughout the Deccan, and might perhaps be advantageously extended elsewhere in towns of any magnitude.

The police, under the Peishwah, made no distinction of persons; peasant and prince were alike amenable to its control, of which there are some memorable instances on record. The great sirdars of the Mahratta league, who were not the most orderly of chieftains, and whose servants were sometimes more riotous than their masters, in vain solicited exemption for themselves and their protégés, from the inconveniences of the system. The chokeydars seized and confined them, if disorderly, without mercy. The Peishwah was inflexible, but, as their applications were constantly renewed, Bajee Rao at length resolved to rid himself of these importunities; and, accordingly, one night, he went forth alone, like

another Caliph Haroun, disguised as a drunken cooley, and was taken up, and somewhat roughly handled for creating an uproar in the street. The captain of the league, the uncontrolled ruler of millions, passed the night in the guard-house. Morn dawned, and the amazed police recognised in the prisoner their sovereign. They, however, kept their counsel, strictly performed their duty, and took him before the *cutwal* at the usual hour, when the case was formally investigated. A small fine was levied upon the prisoner, which he paid and was released. The reader may conceive the effect, and that, after such example, no more claims for exemption were performed on the part of the Mahratta chiefs.

Since we have possessed Poonah, the Mahratta system has been continued, and any Europeans who may be found in the city after a certain hour, without a pass signed by the collector, are invariably arrested. This has been rendered necessary from the vicinity of a large cantonment, and the disorders and bloodshed that would probably result, if Europeans had unrestricted access at night to a large Mahratta city full of armed men.

The strictness with which this rule is enforced will appear from the following anecdote :—

It happened that a gentleman residing at the Heerah Bagh had entertained several residents of the cantonment at dinner, but had forgotten to procure a pass from the collector, in order that his guests might return through the city, by which a very circuitous route would be avoided. On discovering the omission, one of the collector's assistants, Sir R. Arbuthnot, who was present, good-naturedly volunteered to accompany the party, and frank them through. The offer was accepted, and the party started. But the baronet had reckoned without his host, for no sooner were he and his comrades found unprovided with passes within the gates, than they were seized, and, after some considerable resistance, deposited in the guard-house. The baronet stormed at the indignity of such arrest, and asked the police angrily enough "if they did not know him—the collector's head assistant?"

The reader may recollect the story of the sentinel at Gibraltar stopping the Governor for not having a pass, and who, on being angrily asked "if he did not know him—the Governor?" an-

swered, "It is well to be you, sir ; but my orders are positive, and you don't pass here without a pass !" Somewhat similar was the chokeydar's answer at Poonah. "May it please your highness, I well know the light of your highness's countenance, but unless your highness has got a pass, your servant has no power to release you. Your slave's orders are positive to permit no European to proceed through these streets without a regular pass, bearing the collector's seal." This was decreed uncomfortable : a Mahratta guard-room is not the most cleanly of tenements, and there was no prospect of any other quarters for the night. However, a letter was forthwith despatched to the collector and magistrate, desiring he would order their release, and punish the police for the indignity of their arrest. But that officer took a very different view of the subject, and deemed it necessary to take some public notice of the proceeding ; as the leader of the offending party was one of his own assistants, and that the arrest had been stoutly resisted. He accordingly declined to interfere. Ten o'clock came, and the party were brought before the magistrate, and, as may be supposed, not in the best of humours. The case

was heard in open court, and the *pros* and *cons* fairly stated. The magistrate applauded the conduct of the police, in having so properly performed their duty. "He would not, however, deal harshly with the prisoners, as he trusted the discomfort of their present position would prevent any recurrence of such irregularities ; but he must impress on his young assistant, that it was especially incumbent on those appointed to administer the laws not to be the first to break them ;" and with this admonition he dismissed them, without levying the usual fine. The youthful baronet was angry enough at this out-turn of the adventure ; but he was a good-hearted and sensible fellow, and ere long admitted that he was very rightly served ; but added, "that if the magistrate had ever passed the night in a Mahratta guard-house, he would probably have spared his reproof, for that such a lodging was quite sufficient mortification !" And in that opinion I must concur.

The British cantonment of Poonah is about two miles to the eastward of the city, and is very extensive ; the force here cantoned consisting of two troops of horse artillery, a regiment of European

dragoons, and another of irregular horse, two European regiments of infantry, a battalion of European artillery, and two or three corps of native infantry. It is one of the healthiest stations in India, and, next to Mecrut, perhaps the most delightful up-country residence. A few of the houses are superior, but the majority are only of the usual order of bungalows, indifferent enough. Though situated on high ground, there is abundance of water, and fruit and vegetables thrive well. The European barracks are roomy and comfortable, but present rather a sombre appearance. Indeed, the only building that can fairly lay claim to any architectural beauty is the church. The parade ground is extensive, and the roads are excellent.

About half a mile to the south of Poonah rises a small, low, but steep hill, called the Parbatty, which is ascended by a broad flight of steps, and whose summit is graced by some Hindoo temples of celebrity. I ascended the hill, and from the platform of the pagodas enjoyed a very beautiful prospect. Below, to the left, as you stand looking northward, the river Moota wanders amid clumps of mango trees, and fields of corn and waving meadows, until it joins the Moota about a mile

distant, where it becomes a considerable stream. Immediately in front is the city, whose temples, palaces, and houses, intersected by numerous tamarind trees, present a handsome, although irregular appearance. A little on the right is the delightful garden, the Heerah Bagh, with its small but beautiful lake glittering in the morning beams, edged with lofty trees which almost grow into the water, and surrounded by every description of fruit and flower. Further on lies the cantonment, stretching for miles to the right, its white walled mansions half hid amid surrounding verdure; and afar, the back-ground of the picture is formed by the giant range of mountain barriers. Their rocky summits and sun-burnt cliffs present a striking contrast to the plain below; while ever and anon each loftier or more conical peak, surmounted by massy bastions, the residence of some wild warrior chieftain, frowns stern and proud defiance on the spectator.

Poonah and its vicinity are celebrated in modern Indian history for more than one memorable event—the battle of Kirkee almost under its walls, and that of Coreigaum a few miles distant; in both of which hard foughten fields the Peish-



wah's troops were defeated, and the standard of England unfurled victorious, albeit defended with far inferior numbers. But it is more especially celebrated in our annals, as the scene where dawned and gradually developed the master-mind of ELPHINSTONE—perhaps the most comprehensive Indian statesman the present century has produced, and before whom, I think, posterity will declare that even the genius of Munro must bow. Independent of unshaken resolution and firmness—independent of most enlarged notions of statesmanlike policy—independent of a mind stored with all that is valuable in classic or historic lore, and the most intimate acquaintance with Oriental character and language, he possessed a tact that united all hearts and hands, and thus brought inclination in his subordinates to co-operate with duty. In this respect, perhaps, no man was ever more signally successful, while, in his intercourse with native statesmen, he was probably the first diplomatist who outwitted his opponents by a singular combination of ability and *candour*.

The wily Mahrattas, born and educated in that most demoralizing school, an Indian court—whose

whole aim and study was political intrigue, and with whom cunning stood in the place of wisdom, could not be brought to believe in the reality of intentions openly avowed and expressed ; and, accustomed themselves to deal in guile, to overreach by simulation, and procrastinate by fallacies, they could not comprehend that the transactions between states could be conducted with openness ; and they thus sought for the real intentions of our Government anywhere, rather than in the expressed declarations of the British representative. They found out their error too late—the die was irrevocably cast, and with what disastrous result to themselves needs no comment here.

Is it not Swift who, amid his “ Thoughts on varied subjects,” observes, “ the two maxims of every great man are, always to keep his countenance and never to keep his word ?” Now there is but little doubt that this political maxim has been continued with no serious intermission to the present hour. Mountstuart Elphinstone was, however, a splendid exception. He had two maxims of government that merit attention from all who either are in, or may hereafter rise to power. 1st, “ To pay no attention to letters of

recommendation ;” and 2d, “ Never to make a promise.” Of the first he observed, that, if attended to, they became a most intolerable nuisance ; while, with respect to the second, almost every man, even in private life, has cause to repent the shackles they impose. He was, in fact, a politically honest ruler, a rarer character than all are disposed to admit ; and his long acquaintance with the Bombay Presidency, before he took the helm of state, gave him especial advantages for the selection of merit, for the adaptation of means to the end, and application of fitness to office. Liberal almost to a fault, he well knew how to shew the courtesies of society to individuals without inducing false expectations of promotion ; and he was not one of those who think it justifiable to sacrifice the peace of a district, or the *morale* of a corps, in order to gratify some adventurer *without* merit but *with* interest, or to relieve the distress of any pauper simpleton, who might urge as a claim a wife and six pledges of affection. Yet we have known such things under other dynasties. I was so fortunate as to be present on two memorable occasions when public entertainments were given to this dis-

tinguished man. The first was when he bade adieu to the Deccan, the scene of so many honoured labours while commissioner, and from which he had subsequently ascended the government of Bombay. It was in tents on the plains of Poonah. From far and near, all who could obtain leave to this scene, to do honour to the man they loved, were present. We sat down 250 persons—Major-General Sir Lionel Smith in the chair.

The dinner passed as all good dinners do—no lack of food, wine, merriment, and wit! The glass went gaily round, and the cloth was removed. We filled a bumper, and our chairman rose. I think I see him at this moment, with his tall and powerfully commanding frame, his flashing eye and animated gesture, as he addressed us in words too memorable and too true to be forgotten. After detailing the motives that had induced the Society of the Deccan to pay this concluding mark of grateful estimation “to our guest, our common friend beloved by all,” and expressing his regret that Mr. Elphinstone was no more to visit the scene where his labours had been so eminently successful, in promoting indivi-

dual happiness, no less than in securing the public weal, he continued,—“ He has given a useful lesson to any of you, gentlemen, who may hereafter rise to high stations in public life, by shewing that universal kindness, so far from being incompatible with dignified office, is sure to command universal good-will ; and in his own case it will yield him the rare felicity of relinquishing power without the loss of a single friend !” Never, never shall I forget the rapturous burst of applause that followed the delivery of that sentence. Every breast acknowledged its truth—every tongue recorded evidence of its justice. He went on, “ Gentlemen of the Civil Service, you will, I am well aware, do the toast ample justice, proudly remembering that Mr. Elphinstone is one of you. Gentlemen of the Army, you will receive the toast with joy, for Mr. Elphinstone has always been a soldier wherever he could, and has often been seen foremost in your ranks in the field of action. Scholars, however recently from your studies in science or in literature, there is not one of you who would overstep him in any form to-morrow ; you will drink to Mr. Elphinstone as your master-example in talent and in knowledge.

Sportsmen, though last not least, (for I never yet knew a good sportsman who was a bad soldier,) you will hail the toast with delight, for Mr. Elphinstone has ever been your patron, and the partaker of your joys. Up, therefore, up! all classes, with one heart, and we will make the walls echo back the peals of our fervent wishes for Mr. Elphinstone's *health and happiness*." Never was there a truer eulogy—never was toast more enthusiastically cheered. I shall not readily forget my feelings on the occasion. When I joined in that heartfelt cheer, when I gazed around and saw every face beaming with delight, every eye flashing with feeling and affection towards Elphinstone, the honoured, the esteemed, the loved, I thought that such an hour as this was a fitting recompense for thirty years' hard service, even in the land of exile and of sun.

A year afterwards I visited Bombay. Sir John Malcolm had arrived, and Elphinstone had descended from his throne of power. He was then simply a private gentleman, as he remained in Bombay some weeks after he had quitted office, and truly was General Smith's prediction verified. Addresses flowed in from all quarters. He was

voted a statue and a service of plate by the European portion of the community ; while the natives subscribed several lacs of rupees for the institution of an *Elphinstone* professorship to instruct them in European science and arts, and for his portrait to grace the hall of study. And there, too, on the eve of his departure, the most magnificent entertainment was provided. Everything that taste and lavish expense combined could effect—the superb pavilion, the immense suite of tents—the banqueting-hall laid for 550 covers—illuminations, fire-works, nautch girls—the whole assembled settlement. Waltz, quadrille, gallope, followed each other in rapid succession, and every eye was beaming with joy. Midnight struck, the doors of the banqueting-room were thrown open, and we adjourned to the supper-table. We pledged Elphinstone in a bumper, and the cheering of full 600 voices echoed responsive to the toast. He returned thanks—he had ever been considered an indifferent public speaker ; but on this occasion it seemed as though the power of oratory, pent up in his bosom for thirty years, had at length found a vent, and his voice burst upon us in a tide of moving and impassioned eloquence. I saw the

tear-drop glistening in the eye of many a rough fellow, and some even wept outright. It was an affecting and beautiful scene.

It was on this occasion that Sir John Malcolm, in acknowledging the toast of his own health just drunk, dwelt with some felicity on the singular fact of his having been the first to welcome Elphinstone when he landed a boy thirty-three years before on the ramparts of Fort-William, and on his being then present to do honour to his departure from India, as his successor in the government of Bombay ; and, added he, " I know no mode in which I can so effectually prove my admiration of his character, as by distinctly stating, that I will adopt in every tittle his plans ; and although the name of *governor* be changed, the system of *government* shall be the same." This speech was received with the most deafening cheers. It would have been well for Malcolm's future fame had he fulfilled that pledge. But not six months elapsed ere the promise was forgotten—the pledge was broken.

Mr. Elphinstone left the assembly amid the plaudits of thousands, and drove to the quay. The batteries vomited forth their salutes in thun-



der. He embarked, and, soon after the morning gun had proclaimed the dawn, the *Palinurus* weighed anchor and bore him onwards towards the home of his sires.

His name is now no longer Indian, it is European. It is cosmopolitan; for the memoirs of the lamented Heber have spread his fame far and wide—far, far beyond the limited sphere within which, thanks to Indian exclusiveness, the knowledge of his measures of government would have otherwise extended. He has since travelled over all Europe. His sound knowledge, his deep and varied reading, his liberal mind, and his kind and courteous bearing, have won for him universal applause. It has been my fortune to meet with many delightful persons in my day; but I never remember to have met elsewhere a being combining in his character so many amiable, endearing qualities, which add lustre to the highest rank, and heighten the most splendid abilities. There are few who, being in the society of such a man, would not quit his presence more enlightened than when they approached him. There are none who could do so without sentiments of esteem and affection.

## CHAPTER XII.

THE SPORTS OF THE DECCAN—TIGER-HUNTING—BOAR-HUNTING—  
THE NUGGUR HUNT — “THE NEXT GREY BOAR WE SEE”—  
HARRY CL——E——FATALITY EXEMPLIFIED.

AND all this time, what about the Deccan and its sports? With all our love of comfort, a love reputed perfectly *unique* of its kind, there is in the English character such a singular passion for make-shifts, that it is hard to say whether the disorder of the pic-nic, or the compact *mise* of a well-organized domestic establishment, stands in the highest degree of favour. The remarkable fertility of resource exhibited in enforced *al fresco* existence is, perhaps, but an application of that science for rendering the *ménage* perfect which makes an Englishman's house superior in its quantity of self-contained enjoyments to the houses of other people; but the expedients to which we resort upon *voluntary* pleasurable excursions can only result from an inexplicable predilection for “things in the rough.”

Nowhere was this love of making shift more frequently indulged in than at Poonah. The greater portion of the residents were constantly devising pic-nic parties to the vicinity of some hunting-ground, where there was not the slightest vestige of accommodation, and where it was often necessary to be content with the "short commons" resulting from improvidence. But what a temptation there was to indulge in these privations! The grey boar of the Deccan, in those days, actually rushed through the camp, daring the Nimrods to the chase and the combat in the neighbourhood of his frank. To encounter him there was glorious sport; and in such formidable numbers did the sounders appear, that it became necessary to organize a force for the *pastime of destruction*. Clubs were formed, with the odd appellations of "The Deal Table," "The Claret," &c.; songs were made and roared at every mess-table, hurling defiance at the bristly denizens of the sugar-cane plantations and the baubul jungles; and the late Major Morris, called "Tom" by his familiars, was the recognised Dibdin of the hour. To hunt the pig was as gallant an achievement in the Deccan in 1818, as to fight the French in

Portugal in 1809 ; and while he who shrunk from the mortal encounter in the latter fray was branded as a coward, the youth who quailed before the charge of the grey boar was stigmatized as " A Tinker !"

The clearance of the jungle and the industry of the hunters have of late years greatly diminished the number of wild swine in the Deccan ; but the sport is still pursued with enthusiasm ; and I believe every old Indian gives it a preference over any other. And no wonder. It includes all the elements of noble excitement,—ardour in the pursuit, emulation in the race, danger in the charge, and triumph in the death. In the *idea* of the chase of so fierce and powerful an animal as the tiger, there is undoubtedly something sublime. The amazing strength of the animal, its huge jaws, its flashing eyes, and its terrific roar, seem to invest it with a power of attack irresistible by feeble man. We all have read of Mr. Munro, who was carried away by the tigers of Saugor Island, and we look upon those of our countrymen abroad who voluntarily penetrate the haunts of those "savage monsters," and disturb them in their lairs, as people who are very badly off for

excitement, and unpardonably indifferent to their heirs, successors, administrators, and creditors. But here, as in everything else, we exaggerate ;— we magnify the danger of the enterprise, exalting the courage of the hunter, and deprecating as rashness what is the very acme of prudence and precaution. The tiger !—Pooh !—Picture to yourself a dozen elephants, surmounted by their howdahs, little wooden fortresses, each of which contains a stout gentleman and his domestic, two or three rifles, a large supply of ammunition, and a commissariat of biscuits, brandy and water, cheroots, cold ham, and half-a-dozen of Allsop's pale ale—fancy this formidable array of huge beasts and armed men marching down in line upon a patch of jungle, when it has been previously ascertained a royal tiger has been gorging himself upon a buffalo. Disturbed in his repast, the animal rises, growls, snarls, spits, wags his tail, and bolts ; a few shots, however, delivered from different howdahs, at nearly the same moment, arrest his career, and he falls a victim to the power of science over speed and vitality. It may be, it often indeed is the case, that the unfortunate animal is not so completely under the dominion

of repletion as to be incapable of resistance. He will then fiercely turn upon his foes, and regardless of the heavy odds, charge one of the elephants; but it would be a reproach to the skill of our sportsmen to say, that he is suffered more than once in a hundred times to get within springing distance. Pierced by a score of balls, he rolls over, some yards from the object of his attack, and his unwieldy carcass is soon flung across the back of a pad elephant, (an elephant unencumbered by a howdah,) and conveyed to the residence of one of the party of sportsmen, where his skin is rapidly converted into a hookah carpet or couch rug, while his skull grins a trophy of the unerring aim of a battery of rifles. Is there any excitement in this? Have we displayed much courage in opposing to a solitary beast, armed only with claws and teeth, an array of brutes, each of which could trample him to death, or strangle him with a proboscis, and a strong rifle corps comfortably stockaded with a day's supplies and a rich magazine? Yet, such, and no more, is the amount of daring displayed on these expeditions, unless we allow something to the adventurous spirit that can brave the fierce Indian sun and

the pestilential swamps, with all their consequences in the shape of fever, diseased livers, and cholera morbus, for the sake of killing a tiger, or seeing him killed by a brother shot. Now and then it *does* happen that the tiger gets on to the elephant, and lays hold of the leg of the mahout or driver; but the instances of these close quarter conflicts are so rare, that they are rather to be named as singular exceptions to the monotony of the chase, than as establishing the rule of risk. Besides, it is not to be forgotten, that the nearer the tiger gets to the man with the loaded rifle, the greater the chance of his receiving his death wound. Still, with all this dreary attempt at sport, there are men who wind themselves up to a wonderful pitch of enthusiasm about the tiger, and have even been known, in the ecstasy of reminiscence, to allow themselves to commit poetry descriptive of some emotions which they fancy possessed them. Here are some lines—admirably parodying a popular song—which an excellent friend of mine suffered himself to perpetrate in a frenzy of delicious recollection. Reduce it to matter of fact, and what does it all come to? A man saw a tiger one night, and he slew it. It is

cruel to subject verses to such an analysis ; but in grappling with a case, we must lay hold of the strongest illustrations :—

The hunt, the hunt, the exciting hunt,  
And the tiger off with a roar in front,—

With a roar, with a roar in front !  
As we follow his track, not a single thought  
Intrudes in our breasts save of manly sport,  
And our spirit mounts high, and our hearts are light  
As the cloudless skies on a starry night,—  
As the cloudless skies on a starry night.

I'm in the field,—I'm in the field ;  
I am where I will never yield,  
With the game a-head, to friend or foe,  
In following hard wheresoever he go ;  
And though he charge with a savage roar,  
What matter ? what matter ? we love the sport the more ;  
What matter ? what matter ? we love the sport the more.

I love, oh ! how I love to ride  
On my elephant's back by the jungle side,  
When guns are cocked and brows are bent,  
And anxious glances from under them sent ;  
While from the huntsman not a word  
Escapes as the cry of " a tiger " is heard.

I have followed the hounds full many a day,  
And cheerily hallooed them on their way ;  
I have shot on the moors of my father's land,  
With untiring feet and with steady hand,  
But they lacked the charm of all charms for me ;  
So I sought,—I sought the tiger wild and free ;  
So I sought,—I sought the tiger wild and free.

The heavens were dark, and the storm raged high,  
The eventful night,—the eventful night when first, when  
first mine eye,



By the lightning's flash the fierce tiger spied,  
As he ranged the woods with a monarch's pride ;  
And I slew him then, and I shouted wild,  
With the joy and the pride of a huntsman's child.  
Full oft since then have I followed the chase,  
With hound and horn in maddening race ;  
Full oft have I joined in other sport,  
But none save this did I ever court ;  
And while I live,—to me—to me  
There is nought—there is NOUGHT like the tiger fierce and  
free !

Stuff! Of all the sports for which India is famous, there is none of so exciting a character as the chase of the boar. For the last fifty years, in fact ever since English officers have been cantoned in the Deccan, the Carnatic, and the plains of Bengal, hog hunting, or, as it is somewhat irreverently called, pig sticking, has been a favourite pastime, invariably conducted upon the same principles. In Germany and France, the rifle and the *couteau de chasse* are the weapons most commonly employed against the grisly foe. In India, the spear is the only implement the huntsman condescends to use. In some places it is thrown like a javelin ; in others it never quits the hand, but is employed like a dagger or a lance as the boar approaches at the *pas de charge*, or is overtaken by the sportsman.

The favourite "frank,"\* or resort of the Indian boar, is the sugar-cane plantations. He gets fat upon the saccharine plant, and finds excellent cover in the lofty thickly studded canes. Here, too, the sow and her litter ensconce themselves, committing great ravages upon the young stock of the planter. Accordingly, it is upon the confines of such *khets* (plantations) that the hog hunters assemble to watch the exit of the animals when driven from their snug retreat by rows of beaters, native villagers armed with long sticks, (*latties*,) and eager for the extermination of their predatory visitors. Contiguous to the sugar-cane plantation, is generally a rice field or ploughed land, or, perhaps, (especially in the Deccan,) a stony piece of waste land. Over this the boar immediately rushes with the intention of making the best of his way to the neighbouring thicket or jungle. The hunters, in the true spirit of Englishmen, allow him considerable law, and then urge forward their nags in a race for *the first spear*. He who first spears the hog, is entitled to his tushes or tusks. The emulation of the race is thus added to the excitement of the chase. It is,

\* "Does the old boar feed in the old frank?"—*Henry IV.*

therefore, a matter of some moment to be well mounted and equipped. But besides these advantages, the sportsman should have a bold heart, a good hand, and a clear head. The ground over which he rides is often of the very worst description, sometimes nothing but a series of holes dug by the animals themselves in search of food; sometimes jungle, composed of bushes three feet high, intersected by swamps, rivulets, ravines, &c. After running for some few miles, the boar, if he cannot reach his intended covert, suddenly turns upon his pursuers, and, after grinning defiance to them for a second or two, makes a charge, the rapidity and strength of which (if he has not exhausted his wind in the chase) are incredible. Many a fine Arab horse (for the Arabs are chiefly used in this sport) has been ripped up by the tusks of the charging boar, and many a rider dismounted with an injured foot. But this is the climax of the chase; and it is in avoiding such calamities, and driving the spear into the shoulder of the advancing hog, that the skill of the sportsman consists. Sometimes the first thrust kills the animal, and sometimes he rushes away maddened by the wound, and must be pierced again and

again. When at length he falls, the villagers assemble with a stout bamboo and bear him to the vicinity of the tent of the Nimrods, where he is cut up, and provides excellent pork-steaks for the table, while his skull and tusks are preserved as trophies of the hunter's daring and precision. A fine grey boar will sometimes measure five feet from the shoulder to the foot.

Of pig-sticking enterprises, during my stay in the Deccan, I have a lively recollection of some fifty, for I was a member of all the clubs. But I do not recall a single meeting more thoroughly delightful than those of the "Deal Table." Let me endeavour to describe one.

A large field officer's tent—in front of which floated a banner, displaying, on a field of red, the device of a black boar—was pitched on a barren plain, near a dark date grove, bordering the village of K—. Under a tope of mango trees in the rear were seated, round their cooking fires, crowds of natives in every variety of costume. A noble elephant kneeling by them, to have his howdah loosened, fanned himself with a branch, and blew from his trunk clouds of dust, as if heated with a long march; while a row of baggage camels, just

relieved from their load, kept up a perpetual tinkling of bells, as they stretched their long necks to crop the leaves overhead.

Before each of the smaller tents, ranged on either side, were picketed groups of horses, which neighed, as a string of high-caste grey Arabs, in mud-stained clothing, was led past. Nearly all of these shewed, by their battered fore-legs, that they had not been *cantered* over the Deccan stones, and several were disfigured by scars that might have been mistaken for sabre cuts, did not a hog spear, in the hand of each horse-keeper, shew in what field they had been gained. Ever and anon, a sun-burnt rider, dressed in the uniform of one of those hunting-clubs to which I have alluded above, as flourishing throughout the Bombay Presidency, galloped up to the mess-tent, where a shout of welcome received him as he threw himself from his smoking hack. It was the great annual meeting of the Nuggur hunt. Kandeish had sent her hard-riding men to join the pride of the Deccan, and twenty well-tried sportsmen met that evening to dine together previously to the great struggle of the morrow. Old Duttoo, the hunt *shikarree* (or game-finder)

reported, that the grove was swarming with hogs—two hundred beaters were ready to take the field, and everything that could tend to ensure sport had been arranged by the secretary of the club.

Never was a happier set of fellows assembled than sat that evening around the old table. Tales of famous runs, recollections of past meetings, and prophecies of the present, were the all-engrossing subjects. The favourites for the Derby or the Leger never excited more interest among their backers than did the known hunters whose feats and powers were discussed over and over again. "The boar! the mighty boar!" was toasted in bumpers of Burgundy and Claret, and a well-known Deccan song was given by its talented author, (Tom Morris, a worthy namesake of the Anacreontic poet, who sang "When George the Third was King,") with a spirit that roused the excited feelings of the party to a pitch of wild enthusiasm.

## I.

The boar, the mighty boar's my theme,  
Whate'er the wise may say;  
My morning thought, my midnight dream,  
My hope throughout the day.

Youth's daring spirit, manhood's fire,  
Firm hand and eagle eye,  
Must they require, who dare aspire  
To see the wild boar die.

Then pledge the boar, the mighty boar,  
Fill high the cup with me ;  
Here's luck to all who fear no fall,  
And the next grey boar we see !

## II.

We envy not the rich their wealth,  
Nor kings their crown'd career ;  
The saddle is our throne of health,  
Our sceptre is the spear.  
We rival, too, the warrior's pride,  
Deep stained with purple gore ;  
For our field of fame 's the jungle side,  
And our foe the jungle boar !

Then pledge, &c.

## III.

When age has weakened manhood's power,  
And every nerve unbraced,  
These scenes of joy will still be ours,  
On memory's tablet traced.  
And with the friends whom death has spared,  
When youth's wild course is run,  
We'll tell of the dangers we have shared,  
And the tushes we have won.

Then pledge, &c.

By this time the old steady-going sportsmen, valuing a cool head in the field, had slipped away quietly to their tents ; but the lark was singing in the heavens, and the turtle-doves cooing, as the

first streaks of light shot up from the horizon, before some of the young hands rolled to their beds for a brief repose.

At ten o'clock next morning the bugle sounded loud to saddle ; and each man mounting his best horse walked him to the grove. The beaters, armed with matchlocks, rattles, drums, trumpets, and other noisy instruments for rousing the game, were put into line. Small flags of pink and white, to signal in what direction the hog broke, were sent to the rising grounds, and the *battue* began.

Listening to an expected footstep is exciting—the winning of a race—the charge of a tiger—the first whimper of hounds drawing to a cover—the “ gone away ”—the “ who-whoop ”—all are exciting ; and I had felt them all. But they are nothing to that feeling when the canes begin to rustle before the boar shews his bristling front in the plain ; and oh ! nothing to that nodding thrill when your blade sinks into his brawny back.

The party drew up in a retired spot, waiting in breathless anxiety for a break. Every heart beat with a violence almost painful, and the old Arab



hunters trembled under their riders as the cry arose of "game afoot!" and the crash of an animal bursting through the canes became each instant more distinct.

In another moment a flag telegraphs that he had broken cover, and several rise in quick succession pointing out his line. "There he goes!" a welting boar, with his grey head set for the hills. "Let him get well away, for God's sake, gentlemen, or he'll beat back yet! Now he's safe! Ride, ride!"

Away at the word thunders the whole field, *Recorder* in front, waited on by those well-known horses, *Chancellor* and *Holy Bill*. The boar, who was going leisurely along, hearing the clatter of hoofs, looks around. It is now too late to turn back, and with a gruff grunt he lays out a pace which, for a moment, gains on his pursuers. His speed begins to abate, and they near him rapidly on the banks of a deep ravine. He clears it like an antelope; the leading horses take it in their stroke; three, unable to turn or pull up, attempt it at an impracticable point, and jumping short, go in with an awful smash; the remainder do it in and out, and lose so much time that their chance

is gone. Now comes the crisis. The boar is getting blown, and turns half round to meet the foremost horse, with bloody sides and expanded nostrils, gaining on him at every stroke. It is *Holy Bill*, who went ahead with a swerve. His rider drives the rowels to the head, and draws up his horse—the spear quivers within an inch of its mark—“He must have it now.” No! the boar makes a sharp turn. *Recorder*, at his haunches, is let go; and, as soon as the hog crosses, in goes the blade. It disappears, and is withdrawn in an instant. “Blood!” the spear is won. Then comes the death. The boar missed a rip which he attempted at the moment of feeling the steel, and now trots sulkily in front champing his tusks. Another spear has been sent deep into his side by a rider passing him at full speed. “Now look out!” he stops with his back at a bush, cocks his ears, erects his bristles, fixes his little grey eyes on the object of his attack, and dashes at him with tremendous force. The spear receives the shock, passes clean through the body, and shivers to pieces; but it has not stopped him, for a gash in the horse’s flank shews that the ripping tusk has been buried in that lightning charge. The

boar staggers forward with the shattered shaft upright in his back, then turns to meet *Chancellor* cantering up well in hand ready to receive him, and rushes on till under the right stirrup; the horse wheels off, and at the same moment his rider drives the blade straight down between the hog's shoulders; he reels at the blow; a stream of blood and foam gushes from his mouth—one shrill cry, and he is gone. Who—oop!

There were tails shaking and flanks heaving at the end of this run, for the severity of the pace had told, although the distance ridden was trifling. While some dismounting turned their horses' heads to the wind, or stood at their sides slacking their girths, a distant flag was seen to rise, waving its stripes in the breeze. All mounted in haste and galloped towards the signal. "There they are in front,—ride!" The grey backs of a large sounder\* of hog, making strong running for a distant cover, were seen topping a rising-ground about a mile a-head. Away, again, they press their foaming horses—spears clashing at every stroke to gain another stride. The sounder spreads in all directions as the crash of the whole field

\* *Sounder*—a herd.

rang in their ears. Twenty hog at least, of different sizes, were bounding along over the stones. None of them being very large, the party divided into pairs, and selecting a victim, laid into him. The plain shortly resembled the scene of a tilting-match, or, what I have elsewhere seen, of a Turkish Neidoz, where the turbaned Mussulmans throw aside their high-trained barbs in the mimic war of the flying *jereed*: horsemen contending for the spear so nearly matched as to appear screwed together in the struggle, with an unhappy hog in front turning and twisting for his life,—here and there two riders running in circles, so intent on their game as hardly to observe another pair cross and recross their path at speed, pushing their gallant Arabs as if for life and death. In one corner, a vicious old sow springing in her charge, right on a horse's back, and speared through as she dropped by the man behind. In another, a bristly boar at bay, fighting till he falls covered with wounds. Men without caps, and the tattered fragments of what once were coats flying in shreds over their shoulders, tearing across the plain like Bedlamites to overtake a hog dwindled to a mere speck on the horizon.

Such are the groups careering over the barren waste. It was soon covered with the dying and the dead; and seventeen hog fell in this one *mêlée* before the miserable remnant reached their cover. Some men had "taken their spears" off the same horse;—all had at least blooded their steel.

The victors return to their tents,—a boar or two being borne, with their legs tied to bamboo polls, by the beaters and neighbouring villagers who had now assembled to offer their congratulations, and denounce the souls of the hog who, when living, had taken so many improper liberties with their small sugar-cane plantations.

An *al fresco* shower-bath, of the primitive order—the contents of two *chatties* (jars) of water being thrown over the person, refreshes the hunters; and after a gentle Havannah and a change of costume, they are again at the table dining as they had dined before.

*Ex uno disce omnes*—such were the scenes perpetually enacted in the palmy days of the Deccan. How all is changed! Alas! for the interests of the chase, civilisation and agriculture with their ploughs and harrows, their hoes, and spades, and

axes, have converted the jungle into the rice field, the meadow, or the wheat plantation. The ancient existence of the boar is only recognised in the stalworth appearance of the domestic hog, his educated descendant; and old sportsmen instead of making the welkin ring with the "next grey boar we see," dolefully troll forth to the air of  
 "The Harp that once o'er Tara's halls,"—

The spear that once o'er Deccan dust  
 The blood of wild boars shed,  
 Now stands as soil'd in Deccan rust  
 As if all boars had fled!  
 So dies each spirit-stirring thought,  
 And they who would have flown  
 With wild hog's bristly forms to sport,  
 Now ride to sport their own!

So youth—so hunting-zeal doth fade—  
 The idle weapon heeds,  
 The gore alone that taints its blade  
 Tells of its former deeds.  
 And then that flush that tints each face  
 Tells its own story too,  
 And proves the spirit of the chase  
 Once found a home with you.

Then bid that spirit welcome home!  
 High pledge the joyous guest,  
 And join my song while bumpers foam  
 To give the toast a zest.  
 Here's bottom to the horse we ride,  
 Stee to the boar we rear,  
 And nerve and skill to aid and guide  
 The arm that wields the spear!

Amongst the gallant spirits who formed the members of the Poonah hunt was Henry C——e, a scion of a good family, several of whose female branches found their way to India, and became the honoured wives of civilians—those fortunate and much prized people who are worth £300 a-year when dead, and an indefinite sum when living. I single out C——e from the friends of my sporting days, to recount his fate, which peculiarly exemplified how often ill luck will adhere to a single individual.

He was a good-hearted, high-spirited lad, never more at home than when at a lion or tiger hunt, or on his Arab steed after the wild boar or fox; he was a keen and indefatigable sportsman, and an unerring marksman; once in the saddle nothing daunted him, and he went across the country as few could go. He was a general favourite in his regiment, and indeed with every one who knew him. In 18—, one of his relations gave him an American rifle; the small ball they carry is, I believe, ill adapted to use in shooting the lion, tiger, or larger animals.

Shortly after, the detachment of his regiment, which he commanded, was relieved, and he was

on the march to head-quarters, when, having encamped near a village, he heard that some lions were in the vicinity, and had done much mischief to the villagers in the night previous to his arrival. Taking with him two or three servants and some of the villagers, C——e started immediately, and unfortunately for him with the American rifle, but still more so in not having taken with him a few Sepoys, as their courage and attachment to their officers would doubtless have prevented the fearful accident which took place.

The party, after going some distance, espied a lioness; C——e advanced, fired, and wounded it. He then, with his usual nerve, reloaded, and a second time hit the animal. The lioness now rendered furious, and writhing with pain, rushed on C——e and his followers;—the latter had retired to some distance on the first shot, but when the second shot struck the animal and they saw her advancing, they all ran off. C——e was thus left without support, and not having time to reload, the lioness overpowered and struck him down. She then commenced tearing him with her teeth, but the two balls she had received had



by this time done their work, and the lioness dropped dead by C——e's side. He, poor fellow, with difficulty raised himself, and with the assistance of his rifle as a crutch, proceeded as well as he could towards his encamping ground. On his way, the Sepoys of his detachment met him, having heard of his disaster from his servants; they had, with their usual foresight, taken with them a *charpae* couch, and on this they placed C——e, wounded in the most frightful manner, his arms, legs, and body lacerated by the teeth of the lioness, and covered with blood. Even in this state, C——e had not lost his presence of mind, he informed them all how he had escaped, and that he wished the animal to be taken into camp to his brother officers, and that if death ensued from his wounds, they were to make known all he had told them. This circumstance took place about eighty miles from head-quarters, no European officer, no medical aid was nearer to him. The faithful Sepoys dressed his wounds as best they could, and although they had just arrived from a forced march of twenty-three miles, it was decided by them to carry C——e instantly, and as quickly as possible, into head-quarters' camp. All

volunteered to do this, and all would do it, but lots were cast, and twelve of them leaving their arms, accoutrements, &c., in charge of the detachment which followed by regular marches under the *Subedar* or native officer—those twelve men, to their honour be it related, took poor wounded, and as they imagined, dying C——e on his couch, and carried him in nineteen hours into camp. Such a distance in so short a time can only be appreciated by those who have been in the East; and the fatigue these fine fellows endured caused severe illness and fever to ten of them. Poor C——e's wounds were fearful, but the skill and untiring care of our regimental surgeon succeeded—they healed.

His health and constitution, however, had received so severe a shock, that he was obliged to return to Europe on medical certificate, and he gradually recovered. He always attributed this accident to the small calibre of his rifle, and used to say that the first shot of the two ounce rifle he generally used would have killed the animal, and laughingly added, that even as it was, if he had been able to trip up one of his followers, the lioness might have been amused until he had

loaded the third time, when he would have gone close and despatched her.

It did one's heart good to see the greeting given by all hands to the poor tired Sepoys who carried C——e to our camp, and the commanding officer of our regiment called them to the front of the line on parade, and thanked them in the name of the whole regiment, European and native, for the devotion they had evinced ; and, after parade, spoke most feelingly to us all, and addressing himself most particularly to the younger officers said, " he hoped they would never forget this circumstance, which he felt confident would induce them to estimate rightly the men with whom they might by possibility some day be called on to serve in times and situations of war and difficulty." The regimental order-book records the names of those twelve Sepoys in a compliment they well merited.

The skin and head of the lioness are still preserved by C——e's family at their seat in the south of England.

While in England C——e was walking down Piccadilly, when one of his friends came up to him on a very spirited horse, and said, " C——e, I have

just bought this animal, but I fear I have made a mistake, as I cannot manage him." C——e, who wanted to purchase a horse, replied, "Let me ride him, and if he be worth anything I will buy him, as I do not care about his temper." So it was agreed. C——e jumped on the horse's back, and had not proceeded far when a carriage passing too near, frightened the horse, and away he went. C——e tried his utmost to stop him, but in vain; he however succeeded in getting him into the Park through Apsley gate; the horse then made a rush at the iron railing which bounds the Park foot-paths. C——e tried to turn him away, and finding this impossible, he endeavoured to make him leap over the rail: the horse, apparently frantic, paid no heed to whip or spur, and ran against the rail; going at such speed the consequences were serious; the horse dropped down dead, and C——e was thrown to some distance, and his skull fractured. He was taken up senseless, and a cart being found on him, he was conveyed to his lodgings by some gentlemen who had witnessed the accident. His brother, who held a high official employment under Government, was sent for, and his family were also summoned, and came in

London. Again the attention of his family, the skill of his medical attendants, and his good constitution, carried him through a long illness, and he recovered.

On the expiration of his furlough he returned to India, and rejoined his regiment during the cold season of 18—, and delighted they were to have him again with them. The hot weather at length set in, and the scorching heat of the sun brought on pains in his head where he had been injured by his fall the previous year in London; fever followed, and such bad health as to oblige him again to obtain a medical certificate to return to Europe.

Arrived in England, C——e went to join his family, then on the sea-coast. Some months after which, he and a friend went out sailing in a small yacht, accompanied by two seamen.

The following morning the little vessel was discovered keel uppermost, having most probably been upset in a squall; poor C——e, his friend, and the two seamen, were drowned!

Their bodies were picked up some days after on the sea-shore. Thus perished poor C——e! He had been distinguished by his valour in two or



three skirmishes with the enemy, had recovered from the two previously narrated accidents, and was eventually drowned while on a party of pleasure. His military friends and companions grieved at his loss, and the service was thus deprived of a very promising officer. To his family the bereavement must have been sad indeed.

END OF VOLUME I.







